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UNWRITTEN SAYINGS OF OUR LORD

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BY THE REV.

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PREFACE

THIS volume—except the Introduction, Chapter VI, which was spoken at the close of the College Session, and Chapters VII and VIII—is composed of lectures which I delivered at the beginning of the present year on the Smyth Memorial Foundation.

The name of the late Rev. Professor Richard Smyth, D.D., M.P., is remembered and revered not only in the Presbyterian Church but throughout Ireland. He was a truly remarkable man, endowed with many gifts and graces, and in the course of his too brief career he played various parts. He was a preacher, a professor, and a politician; and in each capacity he won distinction.

He was educated at Glasgow, Belfast, London, and Bonn, acquiring thus that largeness of outlook and catholicity of sympathy

which experience of the world brings to a man, yet retaining to the last a steadfast loyalty to the faith of his fathers. His ministry began in 1855 at the little town of Westport, in Co. Mayo, immortalised by Thackeray in his *Irish Sketch Book* (published in 1843). "It forms an event in one's life to have seen that place, so beautiful is it, and so unlike all other beauties that I know of. Were such a bay lying upon English shores, it would be a world's wonder. Perhaps, if it were on the Mediterranean, or the Baltic, English travellers would flock to it by hundreds: why not come and see it in Ireland?" The Presbyterian congregation of Westport was numerically small, but, like many another in the remote South and West, it was composed of intelligent, kindly, God-fearing folk, mostly of Scottish descent; and they recognised and appreciated the qualities of their young minister. The fame of his eloquence was noised abroad, and in 1857 he was called to the pastorate of the large and influential congregation of First Derry. This charge he held, with conspicuous and ever increasing distinction, until the year 1865, when he was appointed by the General

Assembly to the chair of Oriental Literature and Hermeneutics in the Magee College, Derry. Three years later he was transferred to the chair of Theology, which he occupied until his death in 1878.

His closing years were the most strenuous in his career. Stirred to indignation by a great wrong—"the condition of the class from which he sprang, the honest and intelligent tenant farmers of Ulster, ousted from their patrimonial or purchased rights by the tyrannous caprice of landlords"—he had lent the support of his eloquence and enthusiasm to the demand for remedial legislation; and in 1874 he was elected senior Member of Parliament for the County of Londonderry, and deputed to advocate the cause of Tenant Right in the House of Commons. Its triumph was largely due to him, but it was dearly purchased. The burden of his double office was more than he could bear, and he sank beneath it. The cause was indeed worthy, and the sacrifice was not unavailing; yet the loss was great, and it is difficult to acquiesce in the untimely removal of one who might have made an abiding contribution to theological literature.

The Smyth Lectureship was founded as a memorial of him in 1879; and, by the courtesy of my friend the Rev. James McGranahan, B.A., the present incumbent, these lectures were delivered from his old pulpit in First Derry Church.

DAVID SMITH.

4, The College, Londonderry.
1913.

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"Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

St. John vi. 12.

INTRODUCTION

THE VALUE OF THE UNWRITTEN SAYINGS

OUR Blessed Lord spent the three years of His earthly ministry in going about doing good and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven; and the Evangelists have recorded for all time the story of that wondrous visitation of God. They have told us much, all that we need to know, amply sufficient for our establishment in faith and peace and hope; yet what they have told us is only as a gleaning of the rich harvest, mere drops of the abundant rain.* "Many other signs," says St. John,† "did Jesus in the

Much unrecorded by the Evangelists.

* Cf. St. Chrysostom on St. Matt. iv. 24 (*Hom.* xiv.): "Observe the conciseness of the Evangelist—how he does not narrate to us each particular case of healing, but in brief terms runs over a snowfall of signs (*βραχέσι ῥήμασι νιφάδας παρατρέχει σημείων*)."

† xx. 30, 31.

presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name." What he had written was enough for that supreme end, yet he would fain have written all, and nothing restrained him but the impossibility of the task. "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written." *

Fragments otherwise preserved.

What is written is enough, yet, in no spirit of idle curiosity or discontentment with the providence of God, we desire to know more, especially of the words which fell from His blessed lips who spake as never man spake. And it is possible, in some measure, to gratify this desire; for it has chanced that, apart from the Evangelists, some fragments of our Lord's teaching have been preserved. One is found in the Acts of the Apostles †—that golden saying which St. Paul quoted in his farewell to the Elders of Ephesus:

* xxi. 25. † xx. 35.

"In all things I gave you an example, how that so labouring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Nor is this all. Here and there, in ancient manuscripts, in the works of the Fathers, and in other and often surprising quarters, we find sayings ascribed, with more or less probability, to our Blessed Lord.

Their appreciation a pious duty to our Lord.

It is an office of reverence to Him that we should gather up those fragments and lose nothing which may increase our knowledge of Him and His teaching; nor need we be deterred by any fear lest we should derogate from the authority and sufficiency of those golden records, "wherein Christ sits enthroned."* The Fathers who freely adduce unwritten sayings of the Master, held the Holy Scriptures in high and reverent esteem; and it is remarkable that it was an unwritten saying that they were accustomed to employ in order to enforce the duty of scrupulous care in distinguishing "the divine words" from apocryphal

and no irreverence to the Gospels.

* St. Irenæus, III. xi. 11: τὰ εὐαγγέλια . . . ἐν οἷς ἐγκαθέζεται Χριστός.

counterfeits.* There are some of those precious fragments which are well attested and may be confidently accepted as genuine; and these it were impiety to slight. And even such as are doubtful claim our consideration, since at the least they illustrate the thoughts of the early Church regarding her Lord and ours, and preserve the spirit, if not the language, of His teaching.

Our Lord's attitude towards extra-canonical lore.

And it is assuredly no part of the reverence which we owe to the Holy Scriptures that we should account everything outside of their canon profane. Such was in no wise the manner of our Lord; and of this there are two striking evidences which may be profitably considered here.

His use of the Book of Ecclesiasticus.

One is that He had a high regard for that gracious book, the most beautiful of the apocryphal scriptures of the Jews—the Book of Ecclesiasticus, which was written in the first quarter of the second century by another Jesus—Jesus the son of Sirach. There are several distinct echoes of it in His teaching.

* See p. 108.

Thus, it is written by the Son of Sirach:*

"Draw near unto me, ye unlearned,
And lodge in the house of instruction.
Say, wherefore are ye lacking in these things,
And your souls are very thirsty?
I opened my mouth, and spake,
Get her for yourselves without money.
Put your neck under the yoke,
And let your soul receive instruction:
She is hard at hand to find.
Behold with your eyes,
How that I laboured but a little,
And found for myself much rest."

And our Lord says:† "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

Again, the Son of Sirach says:‡

"There is that waxeth rich by his wariness and pinching,
And this is the portion of his reward:
When he saith, I have found rest,
And now will I eat of my goods;
Yet he knoweth not what time shall pass,
And he shall leave them to others, and die."

---

* li. 23–27. † St. Matt. xi. 28–30.
‡ xi. 18, 19.

This our Lord took and turned into a parable: * "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my corn and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?"

Again, the Son of Sirach says: †

> "Prate not in the multitude of elders;
> And repeat not thy words in thy prayer."

And our Lord says: ‡ "In praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

Again, the Son of Sirach says: §

> "Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done thee;
> And then thy sins shall be pardoned when thou prayest."

---

* St. Luke xii. 16–21.
† vii. 4.
‡ St. Matt. vi. 7.
§ xxviii 2.

And our Lord says:* "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." "Whensoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one; that your Father also which is in Heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

Once more, the Son of Sirach says:†

> "Forsake not an old friend;
> For the new is not comparable to him:
> As new wine, so is a new friend;
> If it become old, thou shalt drink it with gladness."

And our Lord says:‡ "No man having drunk old wine desireth new: for he saith, The old is good."

It was doubtless only the lateness of its appearance that excluded the Book of Ecclesiasticus from the canon of the Old Testament; but whatever be the reason, it is included in the category of apocryphal writings, and the instructive fact is that our Lord did not disdain it on this account. It was ever His gracious

* St. Matt. vi. 14, 15; St. Mark xi. 25.
† ix. 10. ‡ St. Luke v. 39.

manner to perceive the worth of things which the world despised,* and He has raised that ancient book from its low estate and crowned it with honour.

His use of common proverbs,

The second evidence of our Lord's habit of counting nothing unclean and employing in His teaching material which lay outside the sacred canon, is yet more surprising, and claims our attention the more since it seems to have escaped notice

* Cf. a beautiful tradition preserved by the Mohammedan poet Nizami (see Zwemer, *The Moslem Christ*, p. 148):

"One evening Jesus lingered in the market-place
Teaching the people parables of truth and grace,
When in the square remote a crowd was seen to rise
And stop with loathing gestures and abhorring cries.
The Master and His meek disciples went to see
What cause for this commotion and disgust could be,
And found a poor dead dog beside the gutter laid:
Revolting sight! at which each face its hate betrayed.
One held his nose, one shut his eyes, one turned away,
And all among themselves began aloud to say,
'Detested creature! he pollutes the earth and air!'
'His eyes are blear!' 'His ears are foul!' 'His ribs are bare!'
'In his torn hide there's not a decent shoe-string left!'
'No doubt the execrable cur was hung for theft!'
Then Jesus spake and dropped on him this saving wreath:
'Even pearls are dark before the whiteness of his teeth!'"

hitherto. In His popular teaching He was accustomed to quote common proverbs—homely maxims which were much on the lips of His hearers, and which served to bring His heavenly lessons home to their understandings. And the curious fact is that several of those phrases occur in the Fables of Æsop and derive their significance from their context there.

particularly the Fables of Æsop.

The most remarkable instance is His protest against the unreasonableness of the Jews as exhibited in their behaviour first toward John the Baptist and then toward Himself.* John was an ascetic, and they had resented his austerity; Jesus was the Friend of Sinners, and went to their houses and sat at their tables, and they were shocked at His laxity and called Him "a gluttonous man and a winebibber." There was no pleasing them. "Whereunto," He asks, "shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the marketplaces, which call unto their fellows, and say, We piped unto you, and ye did not dance; we wailed, and ye did not mourn." Turn to Æsop's Fable of "The

(1) "The Piping Fisherman";

* St. Matt. xi. 16–19.

Piping Fisherman,"* and you discover the origin of this phrase: "A fisherman skilled in piping took his pipes and his nets, and went to the seaside, and standing on a jutting rock first fell a-playing, thinking that the fish would come out of their own accord at the sweet strain.† But when nothing came of all his exertion, he laid by the pipes and took up the net and let it down into the water, and caught many fishes. He cast them from the net upon the beach, and when he beheld them gasping, he said: 'You wretched creatures! when I piped, you did not dance;‡ but now when I have given over, you are doing it.'"

That same passage furnishes another instance. In the course of His vindication of John the Baptist our Lord asked the multitude:§ "What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken with the wind?" This is a proverbial description of a time-server—one who acts upon the Scottish maxim: "Jouk, and let the jaw

(2) "The Reed and the Olive-tree."

* Ἁλιεὺς αὐλῶν, *Fab.* 27 in Halm's edition.

† In emulation of Orpheus.

‡ ὑμεῖς, ὅτε μὲν ηὔλουν, οὐκ ὠρχεῖσθε.

§ St. Matt. xi. 7.

gae bye"*; and the origin of the phrase is Æsop's Fable of "The Reed and the Olive-tree"†: "A reed and an olive-tree had a contention on the score of stoutness and repose and strength. The reed was taunted by the olive-tree for being impotent and easily bowing to all the winds. The reed spoke never a word. And when it had endured a little, a mighty wind arose, and the reed was shaken and bowed with the winds‡ and easily escaped safe; but the olive-tree, since it resisted the winds, was uprooted and broken."

Unwritten folklore.

It by no means follows that a written collection of Æsop's Fables was known in Palestine, and that our Lord quoted from it. The fact, in all likelihood, is that the old Phrygian sage never wrote a

* That is, "Duck, and let the wave pass over you." Cf. the anecdote of James Guthrie, the Scottish martyr, Cromwell's "short man who would not bow": "On one of these occasions, when the prospect of persecution for the truth was most menacing, Mr. Rollock, the minister of Perth, a jocose man, said to him one day, 'We have a Scottish proverb "Jouk that the wave may go o'er you": will ye jouk a little, Mr. Guthrie?' 'Mr. Rollock,' replied the other gravely, 'there is no jouking in the cause of Christ.'"

† Κάλαμος καὶ Ἐλαία, *Fab.* 179*b*.

‡ ὁ μὲν κάλαμος σεισθεὶς καὶ ὑποκλιθεὶς τοῖς ἀνέμοις.

book. As late as Aristophanes' day his fables circulated orally,* and the first who essayed the task of putting them into literary form appears to have been Socrates,† and he never completed it; indeed, he executed only a single fable, and that not very successfully.‡ In our Lord's day they belonged to the common *Volkskunde* of the East, and He employed them in His teaching because they were so familiar to His hearers and appealed so directly to their hearts.§

This was the manner of our Lord, and it was the manner also of the sacred writers. They

* *Vesp.* 1259–60:

> Αἰσωπικὸν γέλοιον ἢ Συβαριτικόν,
> ὧν ἔμαθες ἐν τῷ συμποσίῳ.

† Plat. *Phæd.* 61B.

‡ Diog. Laert. ii. 42.

§ Several of the *epimythia* or "morals" are expressed in Scriptural language. *E.g.*, *Fab.* 391: "Of those who serve two masters and deceive both" (cf. St. Matt. vi. 24); *Fab.* 395: "The story shows that with what measure one metes, it shall be measured to him again" (cf. St. Matt. vii. 2); *Fab.* 21: "The fable shows that the Lord resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the lowly" (cf. Prov. iii. 34; James iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5). There is, however, no significance in this, since the *epimythia* do not belong to the original fables; they were added by Planudes or some other monkish editor in the Middle Ages. Cf. Bentley's *Dissertation upon the Fables of Æsop* (*Works*, vol. ii. pp. 222 ff.).

"spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit";* yet the historians of Israel had no scruple in borrowing verses from the Book of Jashar—an ancient collection of national songs which has perished and would be unknown but for their references to it.† And a Christian Apostle deemed it no impiety to quote from that Jewish apocalypse, the Book of Enoch.‡

Extra-canonical references in Holy Scripture.

From all this it appears how contrary it is at once to the example of our Lord and to the Scriptural idea of Inspiration to account as unclean whatever lies outside the sacred canon. It is no true reverence for the Holy Scriptures; it is, indeed, the very spirit which St. Hilary of Poictiers has justly designated "irreligious solicitude for God,"§ and which is continually rebuked by the Holy Spirit, who oftentimes works by strange instruments and chooses unlikely channels for His grace. "To the sacred literature indeed,"

"Irreligious solicitude for God."

* 2 Pet. i. 21.

† Josh. x. 13; 2 Sam. i. 18.

‡ Jude 14, 15; cf. Enoch i. 9. On the influence of this book upon the New Testament see Charles' edition, pp. 41 ff.

§ *De Trin.* iv. 6: "O stultos atque impios metus, et irreligiosam de Deo sollicitudinem!"

says Erasmus,* "the first authority is everywhere due; nevertheless I occasionally stumble upon certain things either spoken by ancients or written by heathen, even poets, so purely, so holily, so divinely, that I cannot persuade myself that their breast, while they wrote those things, was not stirred by some good power. And perhaps the Spirit of Christ pours Himself more widely than we interpret; and many are in the fellowship of the saints who are not, according to our judgment, in their catalogue. . . . When I read certain things of this sort, I scarce refrain myself from saying: 'St. Socrates, pray for us!'"

An experience of John Bunyan.

There is a striking enforcement of this in an experience which befell John Bunyan during his season of spiritual darkness. "One day," he says,† "after I had been many weeks oppressed and cast down therewith, as I was giving up the ghost of all my hopes of ever attaining life, that sentence fell with weight upon my spirit: Look at the generations of old and see; did ever any trust in the Lord and was confounded? At which

* *Colloq., Conviv. Relig.*

† *Grace Abounding*, 62–65.

I was greatly encouraged in my soul, for thus at that very instant it was expounded to me: Begin at the beginning of Genesis, and read to the end of The Revelation, and see if you can find that there was ever any that trusted in the Lord and was confounded." He searched the Scriptures for that good word, and inquired of one and another where it was; but he failed to discover it. "And this I wondered, that such a sentence should so suddenly, and with such comfort and strength, seize and abide upon my heart, and yet that none could find it (for I doubted not but that it was in the Holy Scripture). Thus I continued above a year, and could not find the place; but at last, casting my eye upon the Apocrypha books, I found it in Ecclesiasticus, chap. ii. 10.* This at the first did somewhat daunt me, because it was not in those texts that we call holy and canonical;

* The whole of this beautiful passage runs thus according to the Revised Version:

"Look at the generations of old, and see;
Who did ever put his trust in the Lord, and was ashamed?
Or who did abide in His fear, and was forsaken?
Or who did call upon Him, and He despised him?
For the Lord is full of compassion and mercy;
And He forgiveth sins, and saveth in time of affliction."

yet as this sentence was the sum and substance of many of the promises, it was my duty to take the comfort of it. And I bless God for that word, for it was of good to me. That word doth still ofttimes shine before my face."

Encouragement for our study.

And thus may we be emboldened to enter on our study of some unwritten sayings of our Blessed Lord and Saviour. They lack, indeed, the sanction of the holy Evangelists, and of none, perhaps, is it possible for us to be assured that it is His very word. Yet this at least is certain—that the truths which they express are His, and if He spoke through those words to the hearts of believers long ago, He will speak likewise to ours.

ACTING RIGHTLY FROM A WRONG MOTIVE

"The ploughman sits still in the church and the priest labours, and the wearied man is permitted to his refreshment, and others not permitted because they need it not; and there is no violation of any commandment of God, even when there is a profanation of the day indulged upon pious and worthy considerations."

JEREMY TAYLOR, *Ductor Dubitantium*, II. ii. 61

I

ACTING RIGHTLY FROM A WRONG MOTIVE

IN early days, as in our own, it was the custom of attentive students of the Holy Scriptures to annotate the margins of their copies with interpretations, comments, and illustrations. It was an excellent practice, but sometimes it resulted in confusion of the sacred text. That was long prior to the invention of printing, and when a scribe in copying a manuscript chanced to omit a word or a sentence, he would insert it in the margin. And occasionally it happened that it was difficult to determine whether what was written on the margin was a scribe's omission or a reader's note; and thus it came to pass that a later copyist, either from lack of discrimination or from solicitude that nothing

Interpolation of marginal notes by copyists.

should be lost, would incorporate a comment with the sacred text.

An example of this.

A good example is the gracious story of the woman taken in adultery, which stands in our copies of the Gospel according to St. John,* but which, on the evidence of the most authoritative manuscripts, is no part of the original text, although it is indubitably authentic, a precious fragment of the evangelic tradition. How did it find its way into the Evangelist's narrative? It was noted by some reader on the margin of his Gospel, probably as an illustration of that saying of our Lord: † "Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man"; and thence, by a happy error, it was transferred by a scribe into the body of the text.‡

* vii. 53–viii. 11. † viii. 15.

‡ In several manuscripts the passage is inserted in the Gospel according to St. Luke after xxi. 38. What a dull scribe, copying mechanically, was capable of is exemplified in 2 Cor. viii. 4, 5, where the true reading is *δεόμενοι ἡμῶν τὴν χάριν καὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν τῆς διακονίας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους, καὶ οὐ καθὼς ἠλπίσαμεν.* To elucidate the construction *δέξασθαι ἡμᾶς* was inserted after *ἁγίους.* In some manuscripts a marginal note is added: *ἐν πολλοῖς τῶν ἀντιγράφων οὕτως εὕρηται,* and in one minuscule this is incorporated with the text—*δέξασθαι ἡμᾶς ἐν πολλοῖς τῶν ἀντιγράφων οὕτως εὕρηται καὶ οὐ καθὼς ἠλπίσαμεν.*

It is to a fortunate confusion of this sort that we owe the preservation of the unwritten saying of our Lord which is now to engage our attention. In the opening verses of his sixth chapter St. Luke describes two encounters which our Lord had with the Pharisees on the question of Sabbath-observance. The first arose over the action of His hungry disciples in plucking ears of corn and rubbing out the grain between their hands on the Sabbath; and the second over His miracle of healing the man with a withered hand in the Synagogue on another Sabbath. Between these two narratives a third is inserted in the Codex Bezæ, that sixth century manuscript which is one of the treasures of the University of Cambridge, and one of the chief authorities for the text of the Gospels. The story runs thus: *

An unwritten saying thus preserved.

"On the same day He beheld one at work on the Sabbath, and said to him: 'Man, if thou knowest what thou art doing, blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not, thou art accursed and a transgressor of the Law.'"

The story is no part of St. Luke's narrative,

* *τῇ αὐτῇ ἡμέρᾳ θεασάμενός τινα ἐργαζόμενον τῷ σαββάτῳ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ἄνθρωπε, εἰ μὲν οἶδας τί ποιεῖς, μακάριος εἶ· εἰ δὲ μὴ οἶδας, ἐπικατάρατος καὶ παραβάτης εἶ τοῦ νόμου.*

and it crept into the text of the Codex Bezæ in the way which has just been indicated. It is a tradition which had lived on in the Church, and some early Christian noted it on the margin of his copy of St. Luke's Gospel; and by and by his annotated Gospel fell into the hands of the scribe to whom we owe the Codex Bezæ, and in transcribing from it he mistook the marginal note for an omission and restored it, as he supposed, to its rightful place in the text.

Probable authenticity of the saying.

Though it lacks the sanction of the Evangelist, this much may be claimed for the fragment—that it has the ring of a genuine saying of our Lord; and the manner of its preservation strongly recommends it. There is much probability that it is an authentic fragment of the evangelic tradition; and it is, moreover, well worthy of our attentive consideration, inasmuch as it enunciates an important and truly Christian principle.

The Sabbatarian controversy.

It relates an incident in the long and bitter controversy between our Lord and the Pharisees on the question of Sabbath-observance—the question which first provoked their hostility against Him, and exasperated them more and more until they

compassed His death. And the strangeness of this appears when the primal purpose of the Sabbath is called to remembrance. It was, in its original intention, a gracious and beneficent ordinance—not a tribute which God exacted of the children of men for His own honour, but a gift which He bestowed upon them for their profit; not a burden which He imposed upon them, but a merciful alleviation of their toil, securing to man and beast alike a season of physical rest, and affording to man an opportunity of escaping from the noise and dust of the world and breathing, for his spiritual refreshment, the atmosphere of Eternity. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is a Sabbath unto the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." *

The divine law of the Sabbath.

Such was the primal intention of the Sabbath; but the Rabbis perverted it, and turned the gracious ordinance into a grievous oppression.

* Exod. xx. 8–10.

The ancient Law forbade the doing of any work on the Sabbath, and the Rabbis defined and extended the precept with elaborate ingenuity. First, they specified forty works save one * as falling under the prohibition, and decreed that a deliberate violation should be punished by stoning to death, while an inadvertent transgression must be expiated by a sin offering. Nor did they stop there. Those thirty-nine were defined as primitive or, in Rabbinical phrase, "fathers"; and each "father" had a train of derivative works or "descendants." For instance, ploughing was a primitive work, and it included digging among its derivatives. And digging comprehended much. Thus, if a chair were drawn over the ground and made tracks, that was digging, and it was a violation of the law. Another "father" of work was the carrying of a burden, and it had a large family of "descendants." Thus, one might not on the Sabbath wear a superfluous garment, or an orna-

Rabbinical legislation.

Thirty-nine prohibited works.

"Aboth" and "toledoth."

* "Forty save one" was a standing number, originating in the merciful regulation that, when a criminal was sentenced to forty stripes, the officer should administer only thirty-nine, lest he should miscount and administer one too many. Cf. Deut. xxv. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 24.

ment which might be taken off and carried in the hand; neither might one wear false teeth, lest they should fall out, and then he would lift them and carry them. It was allowable to walk on the Sabbath with a crutch or a wooden leg, but not to go on stilts, since the stilts were not in constant use and, when they were not in use, the man carried them.* Another of the thirty-nine "fathers" was reaping, and its "descendants" included not only the plucking of a blade or an ear of corn but still remoter contingencies. Thus, a woman was forbidden to look into her mirror on the Sabbath, since she might espy a grey hair on her head and be tempted to pluck it out; and that would have been reaping.

Rabbinical casuistry.

All this is ludicrous, and it would be intolerably vexatious; but the worst of the Rabbinical legislation was that it issued in a morally ruinous system of casuistry. Its prescriptions were frequently impossible in practice, and then resort was had to devices for evading the inconvenient commandment

* The lack of bridges (cf. p. 74) made stilts necessary in Palestine. They were used in mediæval Scotland for the same reason. Cf. Scott, *Quentin Durward*, Note 9.

while keeping it according to the letter. For instance, a Sabbath day's journey was defined as a distance of two thousand cubits beyond the city; but the inconvenience of the limitation was overcome by means of a useful fiction known as *erubhin* or "connections." One who desired to travel farther than two thousand cubits, had only to deposit at the boundary food sufficient for two meals. This constituted the boundary technically his dwelling, and he was at liberty to make it a fresh starting-point and travel two thousand cubits beyond it.*

Our Lord's attitude toward Rabbinical Sabbatarianism.

The Sabbath law of that age was thus at once an offence to religion and morality and a vexatious and intolerable oppression. It was the worst of those "heavy burdens and grievous to be borne" which the Pharisees bound and laid on men's shoulders;† and our Lord steadfastly resisted it. He did not, indeed, deliberately assail it; for that was never His manner. He simply disregarded the petty and harassing restrictions of the Rabbinical legislation, and observed the Holy Day according to the beneficent spirit of

* Cf. *The Days of His Flesh*, chap. xv.

† St. Matt. xxiii. 4.

its primal institution, defining its intention on one occasion by that significant epigram: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."* And His disciples followed His example.

* St. Mark ii. 27. Cf. that unwritten saying of our Lord (*Oxyrh. Pap.* 1, vol. i. p. 3): λέγει Ἰησοῦς· ἐὰν μὴ νηστεύσητε τὸν κόσμον, οὐ μὴ εὕρητε τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ· καὶ ἐὰν μὴ σαββατίσητε τὸ σάββατον, οὐκ ὄψεσθε τὸν Πατέρα ("Jesus saith: 'Except ye fast from the world (cf. 1 John ii. 15), ye shall not find the Kingdom of God (cf. Matt. vi. 33); and except ye sabbatise the Sabbath, ye shall not see the Father'" (cf. Matt. v. 8). On our Lord's attitude to fasting cf. *The Days of His Flesh*, pp. 104, 127–30. In LXX σαββατίζειν τὸ σάββατον means simply "to keep the Sabbath" (cf. Lev. xxiii. 32: ἀπὸ ἑσπέρας ἕως ἑσπέρας σαββατιεῖτε τὰ σάββατα ὑμῶν), "giving the Sabbath its proper use, recognising its true sabbatical significance." The phrase is thus employed by St. Justin Martyr. Cf. *Dial. cum. Tryph.*, p. 229c (Sylburg's edition): "The New Law wishes you to sabbatise (σαββατίζειν) continually. And when ye do no work for a single day, ye fancy ye are pious, not considering wherefore it was enjoined upon you; and if ye eat unleavened bread, ye say ye have fulfilled the will of God. It is not in these things that the Lord our God is well pleased; but if any one among you is perjured or a thief, let him give over; if any one is an adulterer, let him repent; and he has sabbatised the delightsome and true Sabbath of God (σεσαββάτικε τὰ τρυφερὰ καὶ ἀληθινὰ σάββατα)." The best commentary on this saying is Ignat. *Epist. ad Magnes.* ix.: εἰ οὖν οἱ ἐν παλαιοῖς πράγμασιν ἀναστραφέντες εἰς καινότητα ἐλπίδος ἦλθον, μηκέτι σαββατίζοντες ἀλλὰ κατὰ κυριακὴν ζῶντες. Jewish Sab-

It was this that exasperated the Pharisees. He was in their eyes a dangerous innovator, not merely violating the Law Himself but emboldening others to cast off its restraints. And so they charged Him with encouraging ungodliness.

The Pharisees' complaint.

And in truth there was, as our Lord sadly recognised, an element of justice in their accusation. It is the inevitable misfortune of a reformer that the cause which he advocates is apt to be espoused from unworthy motives, and thus it is exposed to misconception and even to disaster. One remembers, for example, how the English Puritans dreamed of establishing the Kingdom of God in the land; and, while they held the power, they strove in all sincerity to banish ungodliness by austere legisla-

Its apparent justice.

A reformer's embarrassment.

batarianism, so alien from the spirit of the primal institution, epitomised, in the thought of the primitive Christians, the entire system of Judaistic legalism; and they marked their severance from it (1) by transferring their sacred day from the seventh to the first day of the week and (2) by giving it a new name—never "the Sabbath" but "the Lord's Day," that is, the day on which He rose and ascended and sent His Holy Spirit of promise. Thus it came about that "Sabbatising" denoted the Judaistic and "living according to the Lord's Day" the Christian temper.

tion, prohibiting not only recognised vices but innocent diversions, and advertising their piety by their dress and demeanour. The issue was disastrous. "To know," writes Lord Macaulay,* "whether a man was really godly was impossible. But it was easy to know whether he had a plain dress, lank hair, no starch in his linen, no gay furniture in his house; whether he talked through his nose, and showed the whites of his eyes; whether he named his children Assurance, Tribulation, and Maher-shalal-hash-baz; whether he avoided Spring Garden when in town, and abstained from hunting and hawking when in the country: whether he expounded hard scriptures to his troop of dragoons, and talked in a committee of ways and means about seeking the Lord. These were tests which could easily be applied. The misfortune was that they were tests which proved nothing. Such as they were, they were employed by the dominant party. And the consequence was that a crowd of impostors, in every walk of life, began to mimic and to caricature what were then regarded as the outward signs of sanctity. The nation

The nemesis of Puritanism.

* *Essays: Comic Dramatists of the Restoration.*

was not duped. The restraints of that gloomy time were such as would have been impatiently borne, if imposed by men who were universally believed to be saints. Those restraints became altogether insupportable when they were known to be kept up for the sake of hypocrites."

It was fatal to the cause of Puritanism when it became the pathway to worldly profit and was espoused by men who cared nothing for its principles but only for their own temporal advancement. And the peril which proved fatal to the Reign of the Saints menaced the Kingdom of Heaven. The contradiction of sinners was less grievous to our Lord and less injurious to His cause than their approbation; and of this the incident before us is a striking example. It occurred on that very day when He was assailed by the Pharisees for allowing His disciples to pluck the ears of corn; and His defence, if it did not satisfy the Pharisees, was not lost upon the bystanders. Ere the day was over He encountered an evidence of this. It was the Sabbath, yet a man was busy at his work, probably reaping his field. It was a piece of audacity startling and shocking

The case of our Lord:

a man working on the Sabbath.

to Jewish minds; and it is likely that the Pharisees directed the Lord's attention to the scandal and charged Him with the responsibility. At all events He accosted the offender, who was evidently a stranger to Him and not one of His professed followers. He neither approved his conduct nor condemned it. It was a question of motive, and according to his motive must the man be judged.

The test of his action.

Wherefore had he ventured on so startling an innovation? It seems plain that this praise at least must be ascribed to him—that his sympathies went with Jesus in the controversy which the Pharisees had raised, and which they were urging so rancorously, and he had the courage to side with Him, regardless of the consequences to which his open violation of the law exposed him. This was indeed much, but it was insufficient for his justification. There was more involved than mere partisanship, and the determining question was the man's attitude toward the principle on which the controversy turned. Had he laid the Lord's teaching to heart and, with a clear sense of the issues, gone to work on the Sabbath by way of protest against the tyranny of the

Rabbinical legislation? Then his action was justified. It resembled the indignant iconoclasm of good King Hezekiah when he took "the brazen serpent which Moses had made," and, because the Jews had turned that memorial of the Lord's ancient mercy into an idolatrous fetich, shattered it and termed it *nehushtan*, "a piece of brass."* But it might rather be that he was a mere worldling, greedy of gain and heedless of religious requirements; that he had fretted at the Sabbatarian regulations which interrupted his profitable toil, and grasped at the licence which, as it seemed to his sordid mind, our Lord's example afforded. And in this case he stood condemned. "Man," said Jesus, "if thou knowest what thou art doing, blessed art thou; but if thou knowest not, thou art accursed and a transgressor of the Law."

A gracious appeal.

There is a note of warning in the Lord's words, but there is also an accent of gracious appeal. He recognised that, at the very worst, the man was acting a chivalrous part toward Himself by openly taking His side in the controversy and setting

* 2 Kings xviii. 4.

the rulers at defiance; and He set the issues distinctly before him. It is as though He had said: "You have come thus far: will you not come all the way? You have thrown off the yoke of bondage: will you not take My yoke upon you? You are giving Me your support: will you not give Me your heart too?"

THE TEST AT OUR LORD'S COMING AGAIN

"The last day is hidden that all days may be observed."

ST. AUGUSTINE, *Sermon* xxxix. 1.

II

THE TEST AT OUR LORD'S COMING AGAIN

THE scene of St. John's long and gracious ministry was the famous city of Ephesus; and the tradition is that toward its close at the request of his disciples he committed to writing what he had taught them of the Lord Jesus, lest after his departure the sacred story should be forgotten. It was, however, as he says at the conclusion of his Gospel, impossible for him to write all; and, besides what he had written, much that he had mentioned in the course of his teaching would live on in the memories of his people and would often be recited by them. Hence it came to pass that the Church at Ephesus was in after days the repository of a rich store of unwritten information about our Lord; and it is natural

Ephesian memories of St. John's teaching.

that precious fragments should be found on the pages of writers who had to do with Ephesus and were familiar with its sacred lore.

Among the earliest and most interesting of these writers was St. Justin, the Apologist and Martyr. He was a native of the Samaritan city of Sychem, or, as it was called in those days, Flavia Neapolis; and he was born during the reign of Trajan,* and died at the age of fifty early in the reign of Marcus Aurelius.† Though born in Palestine, he was a heathen, and, like so many of the young men of that momentous epoch when a new world was struggling to its birth and wistful thoughts were stirring in earnest souls, he yearned after the truth and the satisfaction which it brings to the cravings of the intellect; and he turned to Philosophy, the only teacher that he knew.

St. Justin Martyr.

He had inherited a sufficient patrimony, and he betook himself to Ephesus, that home of wisdom. In his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, written at Ephesus during the forties of the second century, he relates the story of his quest for God. He attached him-

His quest for God under

* A.D. 98–117. † A.D. 161–180.

self first to a Stoic philosopher, but found no help in that school. For the Stoics were mainly moralists, and taught little about God; and it was God that Justin was in search of. So he turned to a philosopher of the Peripatetic school, but left him in a few days when, in the mercenary spirit which was the reproach of the sophists of that age, he stipulated about fees. Next he betook himself to a Pythagorean, and discouragement followed disappointment; for his new teacher inquired whether he had studied music, astronomy, and geometry. Such study, the philosopher alleged, withdrew the soul from the things of sense and prepared it for the understanding of things intellectual; and, learning that the aspirant had never engaged in it, he dismissed him. Thereafter he sought a Platonist, and at first he was charmed with his lofty teaching. "The notion of the incorporeal captivated me, and the theory of Ideas winged my thought; and within a short time I fancied that I had become wise, and stupidly hoped that I would forthwith attain to the vision of God." But the vision tarried, and he realised the unreality of Platonism.

(1) a Stoic philosopher,

(2) a Peripatetic,

(3) a Pythagorean,

(4) a Platonist.

In despair he went one day along the seaside, and there he encountered a venerable and kindly old man. The gracious stranger entered into conversation with him, and showed him the insufficiency of Philosophy, which can do much but not everything, and directed him to the prophetic scriptures, which do not, like Philosophy, demonstrate the truth but witness to it; and left him with this parting counsel: "Pray above all that the gates of light may be opened to you; for none have vision or intelligence save the man to whom God and His Christ have given understanding."

His discovery of God from a Christian saint.

That was the crisis of Justin's life. He found in Christ the satisfaction which he had sought vainly in the schools of Philosophy; and he became not merely a believer, witnessing for his Lord and at last dying a martyr's death, but an effective apologist for the Faith, reasoning especially with earnest heathen who felt the need which had pressed upon himself, and showing them the way of peace which he had himself discovered. And we owe to him an impressive saying of our Lord. It occurs in his Dialogue with

An unwritten saying preserved by St. Justin.

Trypho,* and it may reasonably be assumed to be a lingering echo of the teaching of St. John. It runs thus:

"In whatsoever employments I may surprise† you, in these also will I judge you."

The saying refers to our Lord's coming again and the judgment which He will then pass on every man; and it finds an appropriate setting in His discourse to the disciples of things to come on the eve of the last Passover.‡ "Watch therefore," He said: "for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh. And in whatsoever employments I

An appropriate setting.

* Sylburg's edition, p. 267A: *διὸ καὶ ὁ ἡμέτερος Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἶπεν· ἐν οἷς ἂν ὑμᾶς καταλάβω, ἐν τούτοις καὶ κρινῶ.* Cf. Clem. Alex. *De Div. Serv.*, 40: *ἐφ' οἷς γὰρ ἂν εὕρω ὑμᾶς, φησὶν, ἐν τούτοις καὶ κρινῶ.*

† Such is the force of *καταλαμβάνειν.* Cf. St. John viii. 3, 4; xii. 35; 1 Thess. v. 4.

‡ St. Matt. xxiv. 42–44.

may surprise you, in these also will I judge you."

We are accustomed to understand by our Lord's "coming again" His Second Advent—His final appearing at the end of the world to judge the quick and the dead. And it is beyond question that this interpretation robs His warnings and exhortations of much of their force. For the Second Advent is so uncertain; it has been so long delayed that it seems a remote contingency. The world has continued for nigh two thousand years since our Lord took His departure, and it may run its course uninterruptedly for ages yet to come. And thus we are disposed to leave the Second Advent out of our calculations. We may not indeed emulate the evil servant in the parable who said in his heart, "My lord delayeth his coming," and began to beat his fellow-servants, and ate and drank with the drunken; nevertheless that supreme consummation is so problematical that it has ceased to operate as a practical incentive.

Uncertainty of the Second Advent.

The reason lies in this—that when we limit our Lord's "coming again" to His Second Advent, we put too narrow an interpretation

on the phrase. It bears a threefold signification in the New Testament. Primarily indeed it denotes the Second Advent, but it has also a nearer reference. In that great discourse on Mount Olivet of things to come the impending destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans is designated "the coming of the Son of Man";* and in this sense every momentous occurrence in human history is His coming to judgment, a startling interposition of Him who ever liveth and reigneth, a vindication of His cause, an exhibition of His sovereignty. And, furthermore, He comes again to every man at the hour of death, according to that word of His in the Upper Room:† "If I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

Three "comings again": (1) the Second Advent,

(2) any historic crisis,

(3) the hour of death.

And thus our Lord's "coming again" is no remote contingency but an imminent certainty

* St. Matt. xxiv. 27. On the composition of the discourse on things to come see *The Days of His Flesh*, Introd., pp. xxix ff. and chap. xliv.

† St. John xiv. 3.

for every man. It may be that the final consummation is still far off, and the nigh two thousand years which have passed since His departure are only the beginning of the long course which the history of the present age has still to run, and none of this generation nor of many a future generation shall ever see with mortal eyes the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; yet to every one of us He will surely "come again." He is coming continually. The history of the world is His Book of Revelation; and every startling event is the lifting up of His hand to shake terribly the earth; every triumph of truth and righteousness is a vindication of His cause, an anticipation of the Last Assize. And in a nearer and more personal fashion He will one day come to you and to me, and lay His hand upon us and call us hence.

His "coming again" no remote contingency.

His "coming again" is for every man an imminent prospect, the one certainty that the future holds. And here is the solemn fact: however and whenever He may come, His coming is always sudden, always a surprise. "In an hour that ye think not the

Always a surprise.

Son of Man cometh. And in whatsoever employments I may surprise you, in these also will I judge you."

This is the test, and it is the only righteous test. It is in his unguarded moments that a man's true character appears. You remember how on the night before the battle of Agincourt Shakespeare's King Henry V disguised himself and passed through the camp to see whether all was well, whether the soldiers were at their posts and ready for action. It would have been no test had he advertised his coming; for then they would have been on the watch, and even a traitor would have acted a true part. That he might know what manner of men they were, he took them by surprise; and in whatsoever employments he surprised them, in these also he judged them.

A righteous test.

It is thus—"as a thief in the night"*—that our Lord will come to judgment; and our only security against surprise lies in ceaseless vigilance. This does not mean that we should abandon our worldly employments and spend our days watching the heavens

The Christian attitude.

* 1 Thess. v. 2, 4.

for the sign of our Lord's appearing.* The truly Christian attitude is very different, and it is excellently defined by a story which is told of St. Francis of Sales, that gracious and gentle preacher, a lover of God and of all God's creatures. As he sat one evening in the light of the setting sun, a child nestled by his side with his little chess-board, and the saint played with him. An austere brother espied him, and took him sternly to task. "For shame, brother Francis, that you should engage in a foolish game with a foolish child! What if it were told you that the Lord will presently appear?" "Brother," answered the saint, "I would finish the game. It was for His glory that I began it."

This is the Christian attitude. We are ready

* Cf. the demoralisation occasioned in the Church at Thessalonica by the expectation of an immediate appearing of the Lord (2 Thess. ii. 1 ff.; iii. 6–12). In a letter from Rome to Dr. Chalmers (April 19, 1827), Erskine of Linlathen tells a profitable anecdote: "There is a Romish priest here, who, in the reign of the last Pope, wrote a book on the Prophecies, in which the year 1830 is fixed as the termination of all the wrath; he carried his MS. to the regular licenser, who showed it to the Pope before granting leave to publish: the Pope desired that licence should be given him to publish it in the year 1831."

for the Lord's appearing if He be the Master of our lives; if amid our various employments our hearts keep ever true to Him and leap up in gladness at the thought of Him, at the mention of His blessed name, at whatsoever brings Him to our remembrance. It will, St. Paul was assured, be well on that day with "all them that have loved the Lord's appearing";* and this is the test: how would we feel if He should suddenly appear—if we should lift our heads and behold Him standing beside us and surveying us with His sweet face and His "eyes of far perception?" It would indeed be a surprise, but would it be a glad surprise? Whatever our employment, would there be nothing that we would wish to put in order, nothing that we would fain hide away? Would we rise and bid Him welcome without confusion or shame? Bishop Burnet said of Archbishop Leighton that he had known him for twenty years, and all that time he had never known him say anything or do anything which he would not have wished to be the last word or action of his life. There could hardly be a better test than that.

Readiness for our Lord's appearing.

* 2 Tim. iv. 8.

In truth the best preparation that we can make for the coming of our Lord, howsoever and whensoever He may come, is that we should go on day by day in faithful discharge of the offices which His providence has appointed to us, and in loving service of one another for His dear sake. In the history of America it is told how one day, when the legislature of Connecticut was in session, the sun was suddenly eclipsed and a strange darkness fell. A whisper passed through the awe-struck House that the Last Day had come, and a member moved for adjournment. But an old Puritan rose and said that, if it were indeed the Last Day, he would wish to be found by the Lord at his post, doing his appointed duty, and he therefore moved that candles be brought in and the business of the House proceed.

Our best preparation.

"If I were told that I must die to-morrow,
That the next sun
Which sinks should bear me past all fear and sorrow
For any one;
All the fight fought, all the long journey through,
What should I do?

"I do not think that I should shrink or falter,
But just go on,
Doing my work, nor change nor seek to alter
Aught that is gone;
But use, and move, and love, and smile, and pray
For one more day."

"Wherefore also our Lord Jesus Christ said: 'In whatsoever employments I may surprise you, in these also will I judge you.'"

WONDER THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE

"I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

WORDSWORTH.

III

WONDER THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE

IN the Upper Room on that night in which He was betrayed, our Lord not only announced to the Eleven His approaching departure, but He consoled them with a great promise. He told them that, though He was leaving them, they would not lack guidance and inspiration; for He would send the Holy Spirit to supply His place and be with them for ever.* And after His Resurrection, ere He went home to the Father's House, He appeared to them at Jerusalem, adding an emphatic charge. The Holy Spirit would not come immediately: He did not come until the Day of Pentecost, seven weeks after the Pass-

The promise of the Spirit.

* St. John xiv. 16–18, 25, 26; xv. 26, 27; xvi. 7–14.

over; and they must wait for His coming. "Behold," He said,* "I send forth the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." They needed the grace of the Holy Spirit for their ministry, and they must not begin it without His heavenly aid; and ere they could receive Him into their hearts, they needed a breathing-space, a season of self-recollection after all the distress and excitement through which they had been passing.

Election of Matthias to the Apostleship.

They obeyed the behest, and stayed in Jerusalem, assembling daily for prayer—the Eleven and the rest of the believers in the sacred capital, in all a company of about a hundred and twenty. They obeyed the behest in the letter, but they transgressed the spirit of it, betraying thus their need of the promised grace. Surely they should have taken no step, no fresh departure, until the promise was fulfilled and they had the Holy Spirit to direct them; but waiting was tedious, and a proposal was made by St. Peter, always impulsive and impetuous, that they should forthwith elect a twelfth Apostle in room of the

* St. Luke xxiv. 49.

traitor Judas. The proposal was approved, and they elected Matthias.*

It was certainly a premature procedure, and it was unwisely effected. They prayed indeed for guidance in their choice, and therein they did well; but then they had recourse to the casting of lots—a method which was already disdained even by heathen of the wiser sort.† They would hardly have acted thus had they waited for the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. There is reason in the judgment of a devout interpreter‡ that in their hasty decision they outran the providence of God. It was not His will that the vacant place should be filled so soon. In His secret counsel He had another than Matthias in view, and was reserving the office for that young Rabbi, Saul of Tarsus, whom He raised in after days to so unique an apostleship. The actual course of events was God's condemnation of that precipitate election; for St. Paul was in truth the twelfth Apostle, and Matthias sank immediately

An ill-advised procedure.

* Acts i. 15–26.

† Philostr. *Vit. Apollon. Tyan.*, iii. 30: *κλήρῳ τε γὰρ ξυγχωροῦσι τὴν αἵρεσιν, ὃς προνοεῖ οὐδέν. καὶ γὰρ ἂν καὶ τῶν φαυλοτέρων τις αἱρεθείη ὑπὸ τοῦ κλήρου.*

‡ Stier, *Words of the Apostles.*

into insignificance. His election is all that is recorded of him in the New Testament; from that hour he is never mentioned in the sacred narrative.

Nevertheless a high tribute to Matthias.

It seems indeed that the disciples erred in the course which they pursued; nevertheless their choice of him was a high tribute to Matthias, and it is no condemnation of the man that no record of his subsequent career has been preserved. No less obscurity surrounds most of the Apostles who were chosen by the Lord Himself, and the truth is that many a man is unknown to fame who yet plays well his appointed part and lays the world under a debt of gratitude none the less weighty that it is unrecognised. There are names unrecorded in history yet written in God's Book of Remembrance.

His work.

And in point of fact it appears that, though the New Testament tells so little of him, Matthias did a noble work in his generation. It is said* that he was one of the Seventy Apostles whom the Lord appointed in addition to the Twelve, and "sent two and two before His face into every city

* Eus. *Hist. Eccl.*, i. 12; Jerome, *Script. Eccl.*

and place, whither He Himself was about to come."* And he wrote a book which, though not itself a Gospel, may have furnished materials to our Evangelists, and which rendered a precious service to the Church by commemorating the teaching of our Lord ere our Gospels were written. It was entitled *The Traditions*, and though it has perished, it is frequently mentioned and quoted in the early Christian literature.

An unwritten saying in his "Traditions"

It is to this work that we owe the unwritten saying which is now to engage our attention; and it occurs in the "Miscellanies" of Clement of Alexandria, that gracious scholar who flourished during the reign of the Emperor Severus.† The passage runs thus: "The beginning of knowledge is wondering at things, as Plato says in the *Theætetus*, and Matthias in the *Traditions*, exhorting: 'Wonder at the things before you'; laying this down as the first step toward the knowledge which lies beyond."‡

* St. Luke x. i.

† A.D. 193–211.

‡ *Strom.* II. ix. 45: *ταύτης δὲ ἀρχὴ τὸ θαυμάσαι τὰ πράγματα, ὡς Πλάτων ἐν Θεαιτήτῳ λέγει, καὶ Ματθίας ἐν ταῖς Παραδόσεσι παραινῶν· θαύμασον τὰ παρόντα, βαθμὸν τοῦτον πρῶτον τῆς*

Now what is the meaning of this saying: "Wonder at the things before you"? Clement

ἐπέκεινα γνώσεως ὑποτιθέμενος. It might seem as though it were merely a saying of Matthias that Clement is here quoting, but there is evidence that it is a saying of our Lord. Clement immediately continues: "In which connection also in the Gospel according to the Hebrews it is written: 'He that hath wondered shall reign, and he that hath reigned shall rest' (ὁ θαυμάσας βασιλεύσει καὶ ὁ βασιλεύσας ἀναπαήσεται)." Elsewhere (*Strom.* V. xiv. 96) he gives this quotation more fully without reference to its source: "He that seeketh shall not cease until he find, and on finding he shall be amazed, and on being amazed he shall reign, and on reigning he shall rest" (οὐ παύσεται ὁ ζητῶν ἕως ἂν εὕρῃ, εὑρὼν δὲ θαμβηθήσεται, θαμβηθεὶς δὲ βασίλεύσει, βασιλεύσας δὲ ἐπαναπαύσεται). In neither of these passages is there any indication that the quotation is a saying of our Lord; but it is found in a form closely similar to Clement's longer version among the λόγια Ἰησοῦ recently discovered at Oxyrhynchus (*Oxyrh. Pap.* 654, vol. iv. p. 4). Clement expressly assigns the saying θαύμασον τὰ παρόντα to the same context, and it follows that it also is a λόγιον Ἰησοῦ. Like Papias' Λογίων Κυριακῶν Ἐξηγήσεις the *Traditions* would probably be not merely a collection but an exposition of the sayings and doings of our Lord (τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἢ λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα), and Clement quotes a striking sentence which Matthias repeatedly employed. *Strom.* VII. xiii. 82: "They say that in the *Traditions* the Apostle Matthias in every case (παρ' ἕκαστα) said: 'If an elect man's neighbour sins, the elect man sinned' (ἐὰν ἐκλεκτοῦ γείτων ἁμαρτήσῃ, ἥμαρτεν ὁ ἐκλεκτός); for, if he had so conducted himself as the Word dictates, the neighbour also would have been rebuked by his life into not sinning."

compares it with a saying of the Greek philosopher Plato, which runs as follows: "The mark of a philosopher is this affection —wondering; for there is no other beginning of Philosophy than this."* And if we consider how the principle operates in the domain of Philosophy, we shall perceive its application to the loftier domain of Religion.

Explained by Clement of Alexandria.

The history of scientific discovery abounds in illustrations of the principle. Thus, the displacement of water when a body is plunged into it is a familiar phenomenon, but its significance was never observed until Archimedes of Syracuse in the third century B.C. wondered at it. According to the old story, he noticed it one day as he entered his bath; and inquiring into

A scientific principle.

Historic examples.

* *Theæt.* 155D: *μάλα γὰρ φιλοσόφου τοῦτο τὸ πάθος, τὸ θαυμάζειν· οὐ γὰρ ἀλλὴ ἀρχὴ φιλοσοφίας ἢ αὕτη, καὶ ἔοικεν ὁ τὴν Ιριν Θαύμαντος ἔκγονον φήσας οὐ κακῶς γενεαλογεῖν.* The reference here is to Hesiod, *Theogn.* 780: *παῦρα δὲ Θαύμαντος θυγάτηρ πόδας ὠκέα Ιρις.* Cf. Arist. *Met.* I, ii. 15: *διὰ γὰρ τὸ θαυμάζειν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ νῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἤρξαντο φιλοσοφεῖν.* Wordsworth, *Excursion*, iv:

> "We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love;
> And, even as these are well and wisely fix'd,
> In dignity of being we ascend."

the reason of it, he discovered the law of Specific Gravity. Again, the law of Gravitation has operated ever since the creation of matter; but it was never discovered until that day when, as he sat in his garden at Woolsthorpe, Sir Isaac Newton observed an apple falling from a tree to the ground. He "wondered at the thing before him," and his wonder was "the beginning of knowledge." And the harnessing of the mighty power of steam for the service of civilisation came of the wonderment of James Watt at the familiar phenomenon of the escaping steam raising the lid of the boiling kettle. It was because they "wondered at the things before them," which others passed unnoticed, that these men became discoverers. Their "wonder was the beginning of knowledge."

Also a religious principle enunciated by our Lord.

The principle operates no less in the domain of religious knowledge; and it vindicates for this unwritten saying of our Lord at least a possibility of authenticity that He frequently enunciated the truth which it so succinctly formulates. Two instances occur in His controversies with the Pharisees.

There was nothing which surprised Him more

than their blindness to the plain declarations of the Scriptures. They were the teachers of Israel, the official interpreters of her sacred Law, yet they missed its obvious significance, the truths which lay on its very surface. "Art thou the teacher of Israel," said He to Nicodemus,* "and understandest not these things? If I told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?" Hence that wondering remonstrance which was so often on His lips: "Have ye not read?" Thus, when they assailed Him for allowing His disciples to pluck the ears of corn on the Sabbath day, He retorted: "Have ye never read what David did, when he had need and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him?" † "Or have ye not read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the Temple profane the Sabbath, and are guiltless? If ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." ‡ Here and in kindred remonstrances it is as though He had

The blindness of the Pharisees to (1) the Scripture's plain declarations,

* St. John iii. 10, 12. † St. Mark ii. 25.
‡ St. Matt. xii. 5, 7.

said to His blind accusers: "Wonder at the things before you."

Nor was it merely the significance of particular declarations of the Scriptures that they missed, but the supreme end for which the Scriptures were written. St. John tells how, when they accused Him of blasphemy in making Himself equal with God, He charged them in return with ignorance of the testimony which the Scriptures bore concerning Him. "Ye search the Scriptures," said He,* "because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me; and ye will not come to Me, that ye may have life." The question of immortality was the arena of theological controversy in those days,† and the Pharisees were unwearied in searching the Scriptures for arguments in confutation of their adversaries, the Sadducees, who maintained that "there was no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit." They searched the Scriptures for arguments in support of their dogma of Eternal Life, and they never perceived the testimonies which every page bore

(2) its testimony to Himself.

* St. John v. 39, 40.

† St. Matt. xxii. 23–33; Acts xxiii. 6–10.

to Him who is the Life. They did not "wonder at the things before them," and thus they remained ignorant of the truth, since "wonder is the beginning of knowledge."

The visible the counterpart of the invisible.

And the principle which this unwritten saying expresses is the assumption of all our Lord's teaching, the postulate of His every declaration about God and the things unseen and eternal. It is written in that ancient book which, as we have seen, He so loved—the Book of Ecclesiasticus:* "Thus look upon all the works of the Most High: two and two, one against another"; "All things are double one against another: and He hath made nothing imperfect." The thought here is that the visible world is the counterpart of the invisible, and the familiar things which we behold and handle are adumbrations of the things unseen, and reveal the things unseen to seeing eyes and understanding hearts.

> "Two worlds are ours: 'tis only Sin
> Forbids us to descry
> The mystic heaven and earth within,
> Plain as the sea and sky."†

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* xxxiii. 15; xlii. 24.

† Here perhaps is the key to the meaning of that obscure

Here is the principle which underlies our Lord's parabolic teaching. He pointed His disciples to the familiar things of common use and daily experience—their nets and their fish, the sower and his seed, the shepherd and his sheep, the lamp, the birds, the flowers, and bade them recognise in each a symbol of the Eternal.

The principle of our Lord's parabolic teaching,

"The Lake,
The lonely peaks, the valleys, lily-lit,
Were synagogues. The simplest sights we met—
The Sower flinging seed on loam and rock;
The darnel in the wheat; the mustard-tree
That hath its seed so little, and its boughs
Wide-spreading; and the wandering sheep; and nets
Shot in the wimpled waters,—drawing forth
Great fish and small:—these, and a hundred such,
Seen by us daily, never seen aright,
Were pictures for Him from the page of life,
Teaching by parable."

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saying (*Oxyrh. Pap.* 1, vol. i. p. 3): λέγει Ἰησοῦς· ἔ(σ)την ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ κόσμου, καὶ ἐν σαρκὶ ὤφθην αὐτοῖς, καὶ εὗρον πάντας μεθύοντας καὶ οὐδένα εὗρον διψῶντα ἐν αὐτοῖς, καὶ πονεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐπὶ τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὅτι τυφλοί εἰσιν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶ(ν) . . . ("Jesus saith: 'I stood in the midst of the world, and in the flesh was I seen of them, and I found all drunken, and I found none athirst (cf. St. Matt. v. 6) among them, and My soul grieveth over the sons of men, because they are blind in their heart . . .'"). The saying is a lament over the spiritual blindness of men, their failure to "wonder at the things before them." Cf. St. John i. 10.

"All things are double one against another," and each visible thing has its invisible counterpart. "Wonder," said our Lord, "at the things before you. Recognise the spiritual realities which lie behind them." And so St. Paul says:* "Look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

of all His teaching about the Unseen.

And the principle appears not only in His parables but in all His teaching about the Unseen and Eternal. When His disciples inquired after God, He pointed them to human fatherhood, and bade them recognise there an adumbration of the Heavenly Fatherhood, "a visible image of the invisible God." "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"† And when they inquired after Heaven, He pointed

* 2 Cor. iv. 18. Cf. Ignat. *Epist. ad Rom.* iii.: *οὐδὲν φαινόμενον καλόν. ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, ἐν Πατρὶ ὤν, μᾶλλον φαίνεται* ("Nothing visible is real. For our God, Jesus Christ, being in the Father, is the more clearly visible").

† St. Matt. vii. 11.

them to home with its consecrating affections and loyalties, and told them that Heaven was "the Father's House."

It was thus that our Lord taught, thus that He revealed the Eternal. "Wonder," He said, "at the things before you.

> 'Earth's crammed with heaven
> And every common bush afire with God;
> But only he who sees, takes off his shoes.'

Wonder at the things before you; for wonder is the beginning of knowledge."

THE WORLD A BRIDGE

"What have I to do with the comforts of this life? The world and I—what connection is there between us? Verily, the world is no otherwise than as a tree unto me: when the traveller hath rested under its shade, he passeth on."

MOHAMMED.

IV

THE WORLD A BRIDGE

IN the year 1849 the Scottish missionary, Dr. Alexander Duff, in the course of a journey up the river Ganges, visited the town of Futehpur-Sikri, about twenty-four miles to the west of Agra. It is a ruinous place, but it retains one imposing edifice—the Mohammedan mosque, which is one of the largest in the world. Its principal gateway is a magnificent structure, a hundred and twenty feet both in height and in breadth; and inside the gateway, on the right as one enters, Dr. Duff observed an Arabic inscription in large characters. To his surprise and delight it proved to be a saying of our Lord, which, rendered into English, runs thus:

An unwritten saying in the Mosque of Futehpur-Sikri.

"Jesus, on whom be peace, has said: 'The world is merely a bridge: ye are to pass over it, and not to build your dwellings upon it.'"*

* Dr. George Smith's *Life of Dr. Duff*, vol. ii. p. 164.

The very unlikelihood of its situation constitutes a presumption in favour of the authenticity of the saying, certifying it as no mere legend of Christian faith. And on consideration it appears by no means surprising and indeed quite natural that a saying of our Lord should be found there. For tradition has it that, when the Apostles dispersed on their several missions in obedience to their Lord's command: "Go ye, and make disciples of all the nations,"* Thomas and Bartholomew found their way to India and preached the Gospel there.† It was inevitable that their teaching should be remembered and transmitted by their converts; and this saying may well be a fragment of it. Nor is it at all strange that a saying of our Lord should have been quoted with approbation by Mohammedans; for they acknowledged Him as a true prophet, the

Explanation of its presence there.

* St. Matt. xxviii. 19.

† For authorities see *The Days of His Flesh*, p. 156, n. 4. Cf. Daniel, *Thes. Hymnol.* II. ccxxiii.:

"Joannes ut est vocatus
Ab Epheso est translatus
Ad Christi convivia:
Mauri trucidant Matthæum,
Et Indi Bartholomæum,
Et Philippum Scythia.

Thomam Indi, Judam Persæ
Simonemque, sic diverse
Cœli cœlos penetrant:
Sic ascendunt cœli cœlos,
Ubi Christo fundunt melos,
Nobis vitam impetrant."

greatest of the prophets ere the advent of Mohammed, and no fewer than three chapters of the Koran deal with Him and His work and teaching.* Moreover, Futehpur-Sikri was founded by Akbar, that famous emperor of Hindustan who astonished the sixteenth century by the catholicity of his faith, far excelling the Roman emperor Alexander Severus,† who placed in his domestic chapel images of the benefactors of humanity—Abraham and Christ side by side with Orpheus and Apollonius of Tyana. Moslem as he was, Akbar recognised the imperfections of his own religion and the excellencies of others. He summoned a Portuguese missionary, Padre Rodolpho of Goa, to expound Christianity to him, and he sought, though with slight and only temporary success, to establish in his empire an eclectic faith which should unite all—Pagans, Moslems, and Christians.

"I cull from every faith and race the best
And bravest soul for counsellor and friend.
I loathe the very name of infidel.
I stagger at the Korân and the sword.

* Sur. iii., "The Family of Amran" (Amran being the father of the Virgin Mary, named Joachim in Christian tradition); Sur. v., "The Table"; Sur. xix., "Mary."

† A.D. 222–35.

I shudder at the Christian and the stake;
Yet 'Alla,' says their sacred book, 'is Love,'
And when the Goan Padre quoting Him,
Issa Ben Mariam, his own prophet, cried,
'Love one another, little ones' and 'bless'
Whom? even 'your persecutors'! there methought
The cloud was rifted by a purer gleam
Than glances from the sun of our Islâm." *

What more likely than that Akbar should adorn the gateway of his mosque with a saying of our Lord, just as Alexander Severus inscribed the Golden Rule † over the gateway of his palace?

There is thus no external evidence against the authenticity of this saying, but rather a strong presumption in its favour. When, however, the saying itself is scrutinised, a difficulty emerges. Our Lord is represented as comparing the world to a bridge, and it is a curious fact that the word "bridge" never occurs in the New Testament nor indeed in all the Scriptures. And the reason is that there were no bridges in the Holy Land. They were hardly needed. There were indeed numerous brooks in the country, but it was only during

An internal difficulty.

* Tennyson, "Akbar's Dream."
† St. Luke vi. 31.

the rainy season that there was water in them; all the rest of the year their beds were dry.* The only river was the Jordan, the eastern boundary of Palestine, and it had no bridges; it was crossed by two fords—the southern named Bethabara or Bethany and the northern at Bethshean.† A bridge was an unfamiliar thing in Palestine, known to the inhabitants only by hearsay; and it appears unlikely that it should have been employed by our Lord in His teaching by way of illustration.

An attractive possibility.

It seems as though this were fatal to the authenticity of the saying; but there is a possibility which appeals to the imagination and disposes one to welcome the saying as a precious addition to the evangelic narrative, an unexpected side-light illuminating an important episode in our Lord's ministry which the Evangelists have left in obscurity.

During the last year of His ministry our Lord sought more and more to withdraw Himself from the clamorous multitude and devote Him-

* Cf. Psalm cxxvi. 4, where the return of the exiles to their desolate land is likened to the filling of "the water-courses in the parched Negeb with rushing torrents by the autumn rains" (Cheyne).

† See *The Days of His Flesh*, pp. 25, 72.

self to the task of instructing the Twelve in preparation for the fast approaching day when He would be taken from them and they must carry on His work without the guidance and inspiration of His visible presence. He made several attempts to escape from the multitude and find a secluded retreat—now among the uplands of Galilee and again on the farther side of the Lake; but whithersoever He went, the multitude pursued Him, eager to hear His teaching and, still more, to witness His miracles.

Our Lord's retreats from the multitude.

There was no seclusion for Him within the borders of Palestine, and so He resolved to pass beyond them. North-westward lay the land of Phœnicia with its splendid cities of Tyre and Sidon, famed for their ships and sailors and the wealth which a world-wide commerce brought into their ports. He betook Himself to the territory adjacent to those cities, hoping for seclusion there. But His fame had gone before Him,* and the Syrophœnician woman sought Him out with her story of her afflicted daughter. His healing of that poor sufferer was quickly noised abroad and brought

Into Phœnicia.

* Cf. St. Matt. iv. 24; St. Mark iii. 7, 8.

an eager multitude about Him. His hope of solitude was thus frustrated, and He must seek it elsewhere. But a door of opportunity had been opened to Him, and He tarried a while in Phœnicia, preaching the Gospel to those heathen folk.

It was a momentous episode in His ministry; for that was the only occasion when He taught outside the Holy Land, His solitary visit to the heathen world which, no less than Israel, He had come to redeem. Yet, strangely enough, the Evangelists have preserved no record of it. The reason of their silence is probably that His kindness to the Gentiles was unintelligible and offensive to their Jewish sentiment: they harboured that exclusive spirit which was so strenuously combated by St. Paul in after days. At all events, St. Mark alone mentions the episode, and all that even he gives is a meagre itinerary of that memorable journey: "He went forth again from the borders of Tyre, and came through Sidon unto the Sea of Galilee through the midst of the borders of Decapolis."*

A momentous episode.

It appears then that our Lord visited those

* St. Mark vii. 31, R.V. Contrast St. Matt. xv. 29.

great cities of Tyre and Sidon, and preached to their people; and there is an incidental evidence that His ministry among them was attended with no small success. Toward the close, ere setting out on His last journey to Jerusalem, He reviewed His ministry in Galilee, where His grace had been so abundantly manifested, and contrasted the obduracy which He had encountered there with the welcome which the Phœnicians had accorded to His word. "Then began He to upbraid the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Howbeit I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the Day of Judgment, than for you." *

Success of His ministry in Tyre and Sidon.

Now the fact which concerns us here is that, according to the testimony of the Evangelists, our Lord, in company with the Twelve, visited Tyre and not only taught there but obtained a ready hearing. Tyre was

The magnificence of Tyre.

* St. Matt. xi. 20–22.

a magnificent city—"the crowning city," the prophet Isaiah styles her,* "whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth." "O thou," says the prophet Ezekiel,† "that dwellest at the entry of the sea, which art the merchant of the peoples unto many isles, thus saith the Lord God: Thou, O Tyre, hast said, I am perfect in beauty. Thy borders are in the heart of the seas, thy builders have perfected thy beauty." When the prophet says that the borders of Tyre were "in the heart of the seas," he alludes to the peculiar situation of the famous city. She was built on an island about three-quarters of a mile off the coast, and in our Lord's day she was connected with the mainland by a celebrated mole, constructed by Alexander the Great during his besiegement of the city.‡

The mole.

* xxiii. 8. † xxvii. 3 ff.

‡ Strab. *Geograph.* 756–57: *Τύρος δ' ἐστὶν ὅλη σχεδόν τι συνῳκισμένη παραπλησίως ὥσπερ ἡ Ἄραδος· συνῆπται δὲ χώματι πρὸς τὴν ἤπειρον, ὃ κατεσκεύασε πολιορκῶν Ἀλέξανδρος· δύο δ' ἔχει λιμένας, τὸν μὲν κλεῖστον τὸν δ' ἀνειμένον ὃν Αἰγύπτιον καλοῦσιν· ἐνταῦθα δέ φασι πολυστέγους τὰς οἰκίας, ὥστε καὶ τῶν ἐν Ῥώμῃ μᾶλλον· διὸ καὶ σεισμοὺς γενομένους ἀπολιπεῖν· μικρὸν τοῦ ἄρδην ἀφανίσαι τὴν πόλιν.* Plin. *Hist. Natur.* v. 17: "Tyrus quondam insula præalto mari septingentis passibus divisa, nunc vero Alexandri oppugnantis operibus continens."

Is there not here a probable and strikingly appropriate setting for this saying of our Lord: "The world is merely a bridge: ye are to pass over it, and not to build your dwellings upon it"? It was His manner always to employ the surroundings of His hearers for the illustration and enforcement of His teaching, finding in every familiar object a heavenly parable; and He would follow His accustomed method when He preached to the men of Tyre. She was a great, proud, wealthy city; and the hearts of her people rejoiced in the abundance of their gold and silver, their jewels and their purple and fine linen, and thought of nothing beyond trading and feasting. Surely, when they thronged about Him in their marketplace, our Lord would seek to awaken within them a sense of higher and more urgent concerns. He would discourse to them of the transitoriness of the world, the brevity of time, and the swift approach of the inevitable end. Our English poet, Abraham Cowley, speaks, in an impressive metaphor, of life as a

An appropriate setting for this saying.

> "Vain, weak-built Isthmus, which doth proudly rise
> Up betwixt two Eternities"—

the forgotten Eternity whence we have come, and the undiscovered Eternity whither we are hastening. And this is the very figure which our Lord here employs. He would point His hearers to that wonderful mole spanning the channel between their city and the mainland, ever thronged by brisk passengers—caravans laden with costly merchandise, travellers eager to be home, all thinking of their destination and pressing thither. "There," He would say, "is a parable of life. The world is merely a bridge: ye are to pass over it, and not to build your dwellings upon it."

The Christian estimate of the world.

And such is indeed the estimate which He would have us entertain. The world is good and beautiful, but it is not our home. Our rest is not here; it is at the end of the road in the city of God, and we must hold steadfastly on our journey thither, blessing God for all the pleasant things which His goodness has strewn along our path, but never setting our hearts upon them or deeming them sufficient for the satisfaction of our immortal souls, which, because He made them for Himself, are restless until they find rest in Him.

And this is the test of our conduct of life and the use which we are making of it: What is the world to us—an end or a pathway? Where does our treasure lie—here or beyond? As the years pass, are the world and its poor prizes bulking ever less and less in our esteem, and the Lord Jesus Christ growing ever more wonderful in our eyes and His love more precious to our hearts?

The test of life.

"Oh! well it is for ever,
Oh! well for evermore,
My nest hung in no forest
Of all this death-doomed shore:
Yea, let the vain world vanish,
As from the ship the strand,
While glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land."

"This world is merely a bridge: ye are to pass over it, and not to build your dwellings upon it."

OUR LORD'S PRESENCE WITH LONELY TOILERS

"No fable old, nor mythic lore,
Nor dream of bards and seers,
No dead fact stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years;

"But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is he;
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

"The healing of his seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again."

WHITTIER.

V

OUR LORD'S PRESENCE WITH LONELY TOILERS

A HUNDRED and sixty miles to the south of Cairo lie the remains of an ancient city which, after long oblivion, has in recent years been wonderfully brought to remembrance. The ancient Egyptians were animal-worshippers, and the geographer Strabo names the principal objects of their adoration: "of beasts three—the ox, the dog, the cat; of winged things two—the hawk and the ibis; of aquatic two—the crocodile and the oxyrhynchus."* The

The buried city of Oxyrhynchus.

* *Geograph.* 812: *ἐν δὲ τῇ περαίᾳ Ὀξύρυγχος πόλις καὶ νομὸς ὁμώνυμος· τιμῶσι δὲ τὸν ὀξύρυγχον, καὶ ἔστιν αὐτοῖς ἱερὸν ὀξυρύγχου· καί τοι καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Αἰγυπτίων κοινῇ τιμώντων ὀξύρυγχον. τινὰ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ζώων ἅπαντες κοινῇ τιμῶσιν Αἰγύπτιοι, καθάπερ τῶν πεζῶν μὲν τρία, βοῦν, κῦνα, αἴλουρον· τῶν δὲ πτηνῶν δύο, ἱέρακα καὶ ἶβιν· τῶν δ' ἐνύδρων δύο, λεπιδωτὸν ἰχθῦν καὶ ὀξύρυγχον.*

Oxyrhynchus, or "sharpsnout," was the pike, and that old city was the seat of its cult. It had its temple and its priesthood, and it was called Oxyrhynchus or Piketown.

Once a prosperous city and an outpost of Alexandrian Christianity in the early centuries,* Oxyrhynchus is now a tumble of sand-covered ruins; but ever since Egypt came under British dominion the learned and enterprising Society of the Egypt Exploration Fund has been engaged in investigating that land of ancient mystery, and Oxyrhynchus has proved a rich and precious quarry. In the process of excavation the explorers happened upon a spot which, however unprepossessing, is a veritable treasure-house. It is the rubbish-depot of the buried city; and it has yielded a multitude of papyrus-leaves †—orginally mere waste-paper, the sweepings of houses, shops,

Its excavated treasures.

* In consequence of its serving, like the Great Oasis, as a place of banishment. Barses, Bishop of Edessa, was banished thither (Theodoret, *Eccl. Hist.* iv. 14).

† A writing material made of the pith of the papyrus plant (πάπυρος, whence "paper"), frequently mentioned in Scripture. Cf. Job viii. 11; Isa. xxxv. 7. Moses' "ark of bulrushes" (Exod. ii. 3) was a little boat of papyrus (cf. Isa. xviii. 2). There is an interesting account in Deissmann's *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 20 ff.

and offices, mostly torn and defaced but not a few, thanks to the rainless climate and the sheltering sand-drift, well preserved and easily decipherable by the expert. Of course many, perhaps most, of them are valueless; but the collection has been sifted, and the residuum is a precious assortment of upwards of a thousand documents, constituting a unique and fascinating library. Their perusal is like a voyage of discovery. It is a constant succession of delightful surprises. You turn the pages, and what meets your eye in varied and almost bewildering profusion? Private letters and memoranda, invitations to dinners and weddings, wills, marriage contracts, deeds of divorce, doctors' bills, tradesmen's accounts and receipts, leases, land-charters, property transfers, law-court speeches, police warrants, petitions, census papers, schoolboys' exercises, pages of ancient and, in some cases, lost books, and—most attractive of all—two sets of "Sayings of Jesus" and a page of a lost Gospel, all three dating apparently from the second century.

It is one of those Sayings of Jesus which is now to engage our attention.* Unfortunately

* *Oxyrh. Pap.*, vol. i. p. 3. Cf. Harnack in *Expositor*, November and December, 1897.

the papyrus is somewhat mutilated, and the proper reading of the beginning of the text is conjectural. The remainder, however, is intact, and with a few touches of restoration which seem most reasonable, the whole saying runs as follows:*

A saying of our Lord.

"Jesus saith: 'Wheresoever they may be, they are not without God; and where there is one alone, even thus I am with him. Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find Me; cleave the wood, and I am there.'"

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* (λέγ)ει (Ἰησοῦς· ὅπ)ου ἐὰν ὦσιν, (οὐχί) ε(ἰσι)ν (ἄ)θεοι· καὶ (ὅ)που ε(ἷς) ἐστιν μόνος, (οὗ)τω ἐγώ εἰμι μετ' αὐτ(οῦ). ἔγει(ρ)ον τὸν λίθον, κἀκεῖ εὑρήσεις με· σχίσον τὸ ξύλον, κἀγὼ ἐκεῖ εἰμί. The letters within brackets are missing, and those punctuated underneath are mutilated. The length of the lines determines the number of letters for each lacuna. οὐχί (cf. Luke xiii. 3; John ix. 9) is preferable to Harnack's οὐκ, which does not supply the lacuna, and to Grenfell and Hunt's ($\overline{\beta}$ οὐκ), where the cipher $\overline{\beta}$ for δύο is hardly satisfactory. ἄθεος has two meanings: (1) "regardless of God," "impious" (active). In this sense the heathen and the Christians branded each other as ἄθεοι. Cf. Ignat. *Trall.* iii.: ὃν λογίζομαι καὶ τοὺς ἀθέους ἐντρέπεσθαι. *Martyr. Polyc.* ix.: αἶρε τοὺς ἀθέους—the cry raised against Polycarp in the stadium and defiantly retorted by him. (2) "Without God," "God-forsaken." Cf. Soph. *O. T.* 663. Eph. ii. 12 (the only instance in Biblical Greek): ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες καὶ ἄθεοι ἐν κόσμῳ. The latter is the meaning here. Cf. ἄνευ τοῦ Πατρὸς ὑμῶν (Matt. x. 29). For the idea of ἄθεοι and the word μόνος cf. John viii. 29; xvi. 32; Rom. xi. 3. Harnack's (οὗ)τω

What this means will appear if it be connected with that saying of our Lord which St. Matthew has recorded:* "I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Here our Lord is speaking of the Communion of the Saints and His peculiar presence there.

His presence in the Communion of Saints.

And this is an important truth; yet, like every other truth, it is liable to misconstruction. The danger is that in recognising the sanctity

is preferable to Grenfell and Hunt's (λέ)γω, but his ὥσπερ for (ὅ)που is alien from the vestige and introduces a superfluous letter.

* xviii. 19, 20. From Ephraem Syrus' *Evang. Concord. Expos.* (xiv.) it appears that our saying actually stood in this connection in the *Diatessaron* of Tatian, the disciple of St. Justin Martyr: "As Christ provided for the needs of His flock in all their wants, so He consoled those who live a solitary life with the words: 'Where one is, there too am I' (*ubi unus est, ibi et ego sum*), that none of those who are solitary may be sad, because He Himself is our joy, and He Himself is with us. So too: 'Where two are, there too will I be,' because His mercy and grace overshadow us. And when we are three, then we combine to form a Church, which is the perfect body of Christ and His express image.

of the Church and the efficacy of her ordinances we are apt to regard the world as a secular domain and separate religion from common life. This misconception has found historic expression in the institution of Monasticism, and its numbing influence is widely pervasive. It is the cause not only of the too frequent divorce of religion and morality but of the discouragement which afflicts so many devout souls, forasmuch as their lot is cast in the thick of the world's employments and distractions, and they have so little space for spiritual exercises.

Only one side of the truth.

This saying of our Lord, if it be indeed His, is a corrective of that disposition, a continuation and supplement of His teaching on the Communion of Saints. He sets both sides of the truth before us. First He tells us that He is peculiarly present in the assembly of His people; and then, lest we should suppose that the consecration of the Church implies the desecration of the world, He assures us that He is present not only where two or three are gathered together in His name, but where there is one alone; not only in the exercises of prayer and praise but

The other side.

in the employments of the quarryman and the woodman. "I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them. And wheresoever they may be, they are not without God; and where there is one alone, even thus I am with him. Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find Me; cleave the wood, and I am there."

The idea of this saying in our Lord's teaching.

It is no slight attestation of the genuineness of this saying that the truth which it expresses is one which our Lord had frequent occasion to enforce during His earthly ministry. Thus, it is written of the Gadarene demoniac that, when Jesus was embarking to return over the Lake to Capernaum, he approached and "besought Him that he might be with Him." He would fain have attached himself to the company of the disciples and attended His benefactor, sharing His homeless lot and witnessing to His grace and mercy. It was the impulse of a generous heart, but the Lord had another purpose concerning the man. "Go to thy house," He

enjoined, "unto thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how He had mercy on thee."* That was the service which he must render, that was his high calling—to return to his old place and resume his old occupation, whatever it may have been, and glorify his Saviour by walking lovingly and faithfully along the common path and making his daily toil a sacred ministry. The Lord had need of the Twelve Apostles, who at His command forsook all and followed Him whithersoever He went, that they might aid Him in publishing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of Heaven; but no less had He need of the multitude of nameless folk who had yielded their hearts to His blessed dominion and who abode by their boats and nets, their fields and their cattle and their homes, and glorified Him in the eyes of men by living and working in the peace and gladness of His salvation.

There is, moreover, an accent of grace in this unwritten saying which befits the lips of our Blessed Lord. Recall that neglected passage in the Book of Ecclesiastes † where it is

* St. Mark v. 18–20. † x. 9.

written: "Whoso heweth out stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood is endangered thereby." This is a proverb, and there is one like it in Herbert's *Jacula Prudentum:* "Who remove stones, bruise their fingers." Go to war, and look for wounds; hew stones or cleave wood, and look for hurts. And so, when our Lord would assure us of His continual presence with us and care for us, what does He say? It is easy for us to realise His nearness and His grace when we gather in the House of Prayer; but He is with us wheresoever we may be. He is with us in our loneliness; He is with us when our lot is hard. And He points this consoling assurance by quoting those proverbially dangerous employments—the quarryman's and the woodman's. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them. And wheresoever they may be, they are not without God; and where there is one alone, even thus I am with him. Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find Me; cleave the wood, and I am there."*

Christlike grace of the saying.

* Similar, though converse, is another unwritten saying

It is told in that apocryphal story of our Lord's childhood, the Gospel of Thomas,* that one day, when a young man was cleaving wood, his axe slipped and clove through his foot. A crowd gathered round him, and presently the Holy Child pushed His way through and, taking hold of the lad, healed his wound. "Arise now," He said, "cleave the wood, and remember Me." †

A parallel in the Gospel of Thomas.

And this is the message of the saying. It is a gracious word for all whose lot is hard and painful, and who never know, when they wake and go forth to their day's toil, what

of our Lord: "He that is near Me is near the fire; and he that is far from Me is far from the Kingdom." Orig. *In Jerem. Hom.* xx. 3: "Ait autem ipsi Salvator: 'Qui juxta me est, juxta ignem est; qui longe est a me, longe est a regno.' Ut enim qui juxta me est, juxta salutem est, ita et juxta ignem est." Didymus on Psa. lxxxviii. 8: *διό φησιν ὁ Σωτήρ· ὁ ἐγγύς μου ἐγγὺς τοῦ πυρός, ὁ δὲ μακρὰν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ μακρὰν ἀπὸ τῆς βασιλείας.* A beautiful saying is attributed to St. Peter in Greg. Naz. *Epist.* 20: "A sick soul is near God" (*κάμνουσα γὰρ ψυχὴ ἐγγὺς ἐστι Θεοῦ, φησί που θαυμασιώτατα λέγων ὁ Πέτρος*). Cf. Ignat. *Ad. Smyrn.* iv.: *ὁ ἐγγὺς μαχαίρας, ἐγγὺς Θεοῦ· μεταξὺ θηρίων, μεταξὺ Θεοῦ.*

* See *The Historic Jesus*, chap. ii.

† *Evang. Thom.* x.: *εἶπε δὲ τῷ νεανίσκῳ· ἀνάστα νῦν, σχίζε τὰ ξύλα καὶ μνημόνευέ μου.*

may befall them ere the day is done. "Face your duty," says our Lord, "with a quiet heart. Remember Me: I am with you. Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find Me; cleave the wood, and I am there. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father. Wherever you may be, you are not without God, and the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

A word of sympathy with lonely and difficult toil.

It lends significance and force to the saying that for eighteen years of His brief earthly life our Lord worked as a carpenter at Nazareth, "cleaving wood" for His daily bread. Three years of teaching and healing, and eighteen of hard and lowly toil; yet all the while He was "not without God"; He was the Saviour of the world, accomplishing the work which had been given Him to do, and offering that Sacrifice which lay in the surrender of His will to the Will of God and which reached its consummation when He prayed in Gethsemane: "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from Me:

Suitable on the lips of the Carpenter of Nazareth.

nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt," and laid Himself, a willing victim, on the Altar of the Cross. As Dr. Walter C. Smith, the Scottish poet-preacher, has expressed it:

"Let the Captain of the Host
His deeds of prowess boast,
And Priest and Prophet claim that they
Should be esteemed the most:
But He took the burden great
Of the worker's toil and sweat,
And the carpenter of Nazareth
Did labour consecrate.

"Very dear the Cross of shame
Where He took the sinner's blame,
And the tomb wherein the Saviour lay,
Until the third day came;
Yet He bore the self-same load,
And He went the same high road,
When the carpenter of Nazareth
Made common things for God."*

And this is the consecration of life—when we recognise each common task as God's appointment, the work which He has given

* Cf. Just. Mart. *Dial. cum Tryph.* p. 316c. (Sylburg's edition): *ταῦτα γὰρ τὰ τεκτονικὰ ἔργα εἰργάζετο ἐν ἀνθρώποις ὤν, ἄροτρα καὶ ζυγά· διὰ τούτων καὶ τὰ τῆς δικαιοσύνης σύμβολα διδάσκων καὶ ἐνεργῇ βίον.*

us to do, and accept it loyally and lovingly, after the example of Him who was "obedient even unto death"* and made His life from Bethlehem to Calvary one ceaseless Amen to the Father's Will.

* Phil. ii. 8.

OUR SACRED TRUST

"The craft which thou hast learned, love; therewith be content; and pass through the remainder of thy life as having entrusted all thy concerns to the gods with thy whole soul, and making thyself neither a tyrant nor a slave to any man."

MARCUS AURELIUS.

VI

OUR SACRED TRUST

THE ancient civilisation was indeed very highly developed, and in certain directions it had attained to an even fuller perfection than our own; nevertheless it had serious defects, and not the least was the extreme insecurity of life and property. This arose mainly from two causes. One was the prevalence of warfare and the domestic restlessness which is fostered by continual apprehension of foreign invasion. The other was the deficiency of travelling facilities and the dangers which beset travellers—the chance of shipwreck and the risk of attack by pirates at sea and brigands by land. A voyage in a clumsy galley was both tedious and perilous, and the dread of it found expression in various proverbs—"Forget your home when

Insecurity of ancient civilisation.

you round Cape Malea"; "If you know not how to pray, go to sea"; and the like.* And a journey by land had its perils too. A merchant could not go down from Jerusalem to Jericho without the chance of being waylaid and plundered and abused.†

Concealment of treasure underground.

Hence it came about that, when a man went abroad, he had to secure his property. If he left it behind him, it was exposed to the depredation of lawless soldiery or a tumultuary mob; and if he took it with him, he might be stripped of it by pirates or brigands. A ready device, not infrequently resorted to in sudden emergencies, was to bury treasure in the ground, and unearth it when the danger was past. Sometimes it

* Strab. *Geograph.* viii. 378: *ἦν δ' ὥσπερ ὁ πορθμὸς οὐκ εὔπλους ὁ κατὰ τὴν Σικελίαν τὸ παλαιὸν, οὕτω καὶ τὰ πελάγη καὶ μάλιστα τὸ ὑπὲρ τῶν* Μαλεῶν *διὰ τὰς ἀντιπνοίας· ἀφ' οὗ καὶ παροιμιάζονται·* Μαλέαν *κάμψας ἐπιλάθου τῶν οἴκαδε.* "Qui nescit orare, ascendat mare." Cf. Hor. *Od.* I, iii. 9 ff.

"Illi robur et æs triplex
Circa pectus erat, qui fragilem truci
Commisit pelago ratem
Primus nec timuit præcipitem Africum
Decertantem Aquilonibus."

† St. Luke x. 30–35. Cf. 2 Cor. xi. 26.

happened that the owner perished, and then his treasure lay concealed until by chance it came to light and enriched the lucky finder.* It is to such a stroke of good fortune that our Lord refers when He likens the Kingdom of Heaven to "a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."† And Josephus relates how, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Romans dug up the gold and silver and other precious things which the hapless citizens had stored underground "in view of the uncertain fortunes of the war."‡ Hence originated that ancient proverb, still in use, "Leave no stone unturned"—search diligently for the hid treasure, and leave no nook unexplored.§

This, however, was a rude expedient. The disadvantage of it was that, though the treasure might be safe, it lay idle, and if it suffered no diminution, gained no increment. It was

* Hermes was the giver of good-luck, hence a treasure-trove was termed ἕρμαιον.

† St. Matt. xiii. 44.

‡ *De Bell. Jud.* VII. v. 2.

§ πάντα λίθον κίνει. Cf. Erasm. *Adag.* See a collection of illustrative passages in Wetstein's note on St. Matt. xiii. 44.

suitable enough for a primitive age, but as civilisation advanced, a better method was required, and the art of banking came into practice. The ancient banker did an extensive and varied business. He was a money-changer, a usurer, an investor, a trustee. If a man was going abroad and had no partner to entrust with his affairs, he would deposit his money with the banker, and the latter would trade with it during his absence, giving him a token by way of receipt and rendering it on presentation of the token either to the depositor or to some other with whom he had done business and to whom he had given the token in lieu of payment.

The institution of banking.

Two qualities went to the making of a good banker. One was skill in testing the coins which were tendered to him, and detecting counterfeits,* since notwithstanding heavy penalties forgery was extensively practised, usually by covering iron or copper with a thin coating of precious metal. The test was twofold—ringing a suspicious

Qualities of an approved banker.

* Genuine money was δόκιμον ἀργύριον and counterfeit money κίβδηλον ἀργύριον. To test was δοκιμάζειν.

coin on the table and weighing it in scales. Detective skill was necessary in the banker's own interest; and incorruptible integrity was necessary in the interests of his clients and no less, indeed, in his own, since fidelity is the foundation of trust. A banker's honour was generally unimpeachable; but there were exceptions, and stories are told of fraudulent trustees who, when they could with impunity, disowned their tokens and refused to render their deposits on demand.*

A reference to banking in our Lord's parabolic teaching.

Banking was thus a conspicuous and familiar institution in the ancient world, and our Lord made a striking use of it in His parable of the Talents.† He describes there how a rich man had occasion to go abroad for a long time. He was in the fortunate position of being able to leave his estate in competent hands without resorting to his banker, since he had three servants of proved competence. So, according to their several abilities, he entrusted one of them with five talents—that is, roughly, £1,000,

* Cf. the story of Glaukos the Spartan in Herod. vi. 86. On the bankers (τραπεζῖται) see Becker's *Charicles*, Sc. IV.

† St. Matt. xxv. 14–30.

—the second with two, and the third with one; and bade them trade with his money during his absence. The first and second diligently and successfully discharged their trust; but the third belied his master's confidence. He was not dishonest, but he was slothful, and, moreover, he was aggrieved at the comparative smallness of his trust; and so he hid his talent in the earth and on his master's return restored it as he had received it, undiminished but unaugmented. "Thou wicked and slothful servant!" said the master. "Thou oughtest to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back mine own with interest."

An unwritten reference.

The Evangelists have recorded no other instance where our Lord referred to the bankers, but another instance is furnished by an unwritten saying of His which is more frequently quoted in the patristic literature than any other,* and which, in addition to this extensive attestation, has much inherent probability. It is a concise epigram, precisely the sort of saying which would lodge in the

* Resch (Gebhardt and Harnack's *Text. u. Untersuch.*, v. 4) has collected no fewer than sixty-nine quotations.

memory and pass intact from mouth to mouth It runs thus :*

"Show yourselves approved bankers."

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* The saying occurs thrice in the Clementine Homilies, ii. 51 : εὐλόγως ὁ διδάσκαλος ἡμῶν ἔλεγεν· γίνεσθε τραπεζῖται δόκιμοι· ὡς τῶν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς τινῶν μὲν δοκίμων ὄντων λόγων τινῶν δὲ κιβδήλων. iii. 50 ; xviii. 20. Orig. *Comm. in Evang. Joan.* xix. 2 : τὴν ἐντολὴν Ἰησοῦ λέγουσαν· δόκιμοι τραπεζῖται γίνεσθε. *In Evang. Matth.* xii. 2. Ambros. *Expos. Evang. sec. Luc.* I. 1 : "erat autem populi gratia discernere spiritus, ut cognosceret quos referre deberet in numerum prophetarum ; quos autem quasi *bonus nummularius* improbaret . . . : sic et nunc in Novo Testamento multi Evangelia scribere conati sunt, quæ *boni nummularii* non probarunt." Jerome, *Epist.* cxix. 11 (*ad Minervium et Alexandrum Monachos*) : "Si quis autem contrariæ factionis immurmurat, quare eorum explanationes legam, quorum dogmatibus non acquiesco, sciat me illud Apostoli libenter audire : *Omnia probate, quod bonum est tenete* (1 Thess. v. 21), et Salvatoris verba dicentis : *Estote probati nummularii*, ut si quis nummus adulter est, et figuram Cæsaris non habet, nec signatus est moneta publica, reprobetur." Occasionally it is called an "apostolic" saying. Cf. Dionysius of Alexandria in Euseb. *H. E.* vii. 7 : ἀπεδεξάμην τὸ ὅραμα ὡς ἀποστολικῇ φωνῇ συντρέχον τῇ λέγουσῃ πρὸς τοὺς δυνατωτέρους· γίνεσθε δόκιμοι τραπεζῖται. (See Heinichen, Exc. IX.) Socrat. *E. H.* iii. 16 : ἄλλως τε παρεγγυῶσιν ἡμῖν ὅ τε Χριστὸς καὶ ὁ τούτου ἀπόστολος· "γίνεσθε τραπεζῖται δόκιμοι," ὥστε "τὰ πάντα δοκιμάζειν, τὸ καλὸν κατεχόντας" (1 Thess. v. 21), προσέχειν δὲ "μὴ τις ὑμᾶς ἔσται συλαγωγῶν διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης" (Col. ii. 8). In Clem. Alex. *Strom.* I. xxviii. 176 it is quoted as an exhortation of "the Scriptures."

The saying was applied in two ways by the Fathers in their numerous citations of it. Most frequently it was used, like that precept of St. Paul:* "Prove all things; hold fast that which is genuine;† abstain from every form of evil," in connection with the office, so urgent in those days, of distinguishing the true Scriptures, "the divine words," as Origen styles them, "coins stamped with the image of the Great King," from apocryphal writings, especially those spurious legends of our Lord's childhood—"profane and oldwifish fables," as St. Paul terms them‡—which circulated so extensively in the early Church.§ It was the office of "an approved banker" to detect and reject such base counterfeits, and guard unimpaired and uncorrupted "the genuine deposit"‖ of the evangelic tradition.¶

Patristic applications of the saying:

(1) discrimination of true and false Scriptures;

Again, the saying was taken as an injunction

* 1 Thess. v. 21.

† *καλὸν*. Cf. Xen. *Mem.* III. i. 9: *διαγιγνώσκειν τό τε καλὸν ἀργύριον καὶ τὸ κίβδηλον.*

‡ 1 Tim. iv. 7.

§ Cf. *The Historic Jesus*, chap. ii.

‖ 2 Tim. i. 14: *τὴν καλὴν παραθήκην.*

¶ Cf. *The Days of His Flesh*, Introd. pp. xv f.

to cultivate the art of spiritual discernment. Thus, Origen quotes it in dealing with the request of the Pharisees that our Lord should "shew them a sign from heaven"* and their accusation that He "cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils."† "They erred," he says, "regarding both, the signs on earth and those from heaven, not being 'approved bankers,' and not knowing how to distinguish the spirits that are at work, which sort are from God and which sort are in revolt from Him." Thus, "an approved banker" is one who has the faculty of spiritual discernment, according to the exhortation of St. John:‡ "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove§ the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

(2) spiritual discernment.

Both these applications turn upon that essential characteristic of "an approved banker"—the aptitude for distinguishing between the genuine and the counterfeit. The saying, however, admits of other and larger applications, and one is suggested by an in-

A larger application.

* St. Matt. xvi. 1.
† St. Matt. xii. 24.
‡ 1 John iv. 1.
§ δοκιμάζετε.

teresting parallel in that charming allegory, *The Tablet*, a sort of Greek *Pilgrim's Progress*, reputedly the work of Cebes, one of the little company of his disciples who attended Socrates during his last hours in the prison of Athens.* "Put no faith in Fortune; think nothing sure, nothing steadfast which you receive from her, neither reckon it your own. For there is nothing to prevent her from taking it away again and giving it to another, as frequently she is wont. For this reason, then, be unconquered by her gifts, and neither rejoice when she gives nor despond when she takes away; neither reproach her nor praise her. For she does nothing with reason but everything at random and haphazard. Therefore wonder not whatever she may do, nor show yourselves like the bad bankers.† For they, when they receive money from men, rejoice and think it their own; and when it is required of them again, are irritated and fancy themselves ill-used; not remembering that they received the deposits on the understanding that there was nothing to prevent the depositor from reclaiming them."

* Ceb. *Tab.* xxxi.

† *τοῖς κακοῖς τραπεζίταις.*

This is a salutary, if somewhat Stoical, exhortation; and it points to the large and profoundly Christian lesson which our unwritten saying conveys, and which, if it be indeed a saying of His, our Lord chiefly intended. That lesson is that a man's life is a sacred trust which God has committed to him, and of which he must one day render an account. We are God's bankers, and we must show ourselves approved. We must discharge our trust.

Our life a trust.

Such is the Christian attitude toward life; and it is the golden secret at once of satisfaction and of success. It is this ideal that redeems life from pettiness, and delivers a man from the curse of discontent. What was it that moved the unfaithful servant in our Lord's parable to play so ill a part? It was dissatisfaction with his master's appointment and resentment at the smallness of his trust compared with the larger responsibilities and opportunities of his fellow-servants. And so he entertained hard thoughts of his master, and instead of trading the more diligently with his one poor talent buried it in the ground. This is the spirit which ruins many a

The curse of discontent.

life. It seems to a man so hard that his lot should be cast in an obscure place amid petty circumstances and trivial employments, with no chance of winning distinction, no opportunity for proving his powers; and he is apt to lose heart, and grow bitter, and, in fretting for greater, neglect the opportunities which he has.

The remedy lies in recognising that, whatever our lot may be, it is God's appointment.

Its remedy.

It is a sacred trust, and our part is to accept it loyally and discharge it faithfully, in the spirit of these lines of Archbishop Trench:

> "Thou cam'st not to thy place by accident,
> It is the very place God meant for thee;
> And shouldst thou there small scope for action see,
> Do not for this give room to discontent."

This is the spirit which saves a man from fretting at a narrow lot, from cowardice in the face of difficulties, from demoralisation when things go against him.

And, moreover, it is the spirit which brings enlargement and discovers the pathway to promotion. The complaint that opportunity is lacking is a poor and cowardly pretence

Opportunity is never lacking, and what seems a lack of opportunity is in truth, for a brave and faithful heart, the noblest opportunity of all.* Inquire of one who has achieved distinction, and in most instances you will find that he started his career amid weakness and discouragement, but he accepted his lot humbly and resolutely, and gathered strength and wisdom day by day, fitting himself in obscurity for larger and nobler service—"preparing in winter quarters for the summer campaign": and now that he has gained his reward, he looks back on those years which seemed so bleak and barren, and blesses God for the opportunity which they brought, and the grace vouchsafed him to profit by it.

The pathway to promotion.

This is the secret of advancement, the sure, the only pathway to honour. There is a Rabbinical story of Moses, that during his season of exile in the land of Midian, while he was serving Jethro as a shepherd, never dreaming of the exaltation which was in store for him, he one day missed

A Rabbinical story.

* Cf. M. Aurel. xi. 7: "How distinctly it appears that there is no other condition of life so suitable for philosophising as this in which you now happen to be!"

a lamb out of the flock entrusted to his care; and he went in quest of it. After a long and weary search he found it in the desert, "sick, and helpless, and ready to die," and laid it gently on his shoulder, and bore it home and dressed its wounds. And that night the Lord appeared unto Moses, and said unto him: "Because thou hast been merciful to a man's beast, thou shalt be shepherd of My flock, even Israel."

"He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?"* "With good reason did our Master say: 'Show yourselves approved bankers.'"

* St. Luke xvi. 10, 12.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE LORD

"The History of the World is not intelligible apart from a Government of the World."

WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT.

VII

THE MYSTERIES OF THE LORD

WHEN our Lord dwelt among men, He consecrated and ennobled whatsoever He touched. The very language which He employed was transfigured and invested with a richer and diviner significance. The word "mystery" is an instance of this. It belonged originally to the ritual of the Eleusinian Mysteries, and it denoted the secret which was entrusted to the initiate,* and which he was pledged to preserve inviolate.† Hence it came to be used of a

The term "mystery": its classical use;

* ὁ μεμυημένος.

† Lucian's Demonax would not be initiated, because, "if the mysteries were bad, he would not keep silence to those who were not yet initiated but would deter them from the rites; and if they were good, he would proclaim them to all as a philanthropic duty."

"secret" generally, as in Menander's cynical epigram: *

> "If you ne'er let your friend your secret know
> You need not fear him when he turns your foe."

Our Lord appropriated the word, and, as the Psalmist had spoken of "the secret of the Lord" which "is with them that fear Him,"† and the Prophet of "the secret" which the Lord "revealed unto His servants the prophets,"‡ so He spoke of "the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven," the blessed truths which He revealed but which were hidden from the wise and understanding who lacked the teaching of the Father and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.§ "The disciples came and said unto Him, Why speakest Thou unto them in parables? And He answered and said unto them, Unto you it is given to

its Christian use;

* Fragm. 687:

> μυστήριόν σου μὴ κατείπῃς τῷ φίλῳ,
> κοὐ μὴ φοβηθῇς αὐτὸν ἐχθρὸν γενόμενον.

† Psa. xxv. 14.
‡ Amos iii. 7.
§ St. Matt. xi. 25–27; xvi. 17.

know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given." *

St. Paul received the word from the Master's teaching and unfolded the idea. It is used in his theology of a providential purpose hidden for ages and at length manifested in Christ, especially that purpose so wonderful in the Apostle's eyes—the ingathering of the Gentiles and their incorporation with Israel in the Commonwealth of God. "By revelation was made known unto me the mystery, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel." †

in the Pauline theology:

a long hidden purpose revealed in Christ;

* St. Matt. xiii. 10, 11.

† Eph. iii. 3, 5, 6. Cf. Col. i. 26, 27; Rom. xvi. 25–27. Thus μυστήριον signified generally a symbol, anything with a hidden meaning; and so St. Paul applies the term to the Incarnation (1 Tim. iii. 16), since God was at once veiled and revealed by the flesh, and to marriage (Eph. v. 32) as symbolising the relation between Christ and His Bride the Church. Hence in patristic theology it came to mean a Sacrament, since, according to the scholastic definition, a Sacrament is "a visible form of invisible grace."

For ages it had seemed as though the Gentiles were outcasts from God's love and care; but all the while they were in His heart, and His patient purpose of grace regarding them was being wrought out toward its fulfilment and manifestation in Christ.

Such was the Apostle's philosophy of history; and he saw the future in the light which Christ had shed upon the past, and reached out in faith to the manifestation of other mysteries as yet unrevealed. Thus, it seemed as though the blessing of the Gentiles had been obtained at a heavy cost—the cruel calamity of the rejection of Israel. She had been thrust out that they might be brought in; and the thought was for the Apostle a "great sorrow and unceasing pain in his heart."* He could not acquiesce in it, and he recognised here another "mystery" which would one day be gloriously revealed. A hidden providence was at work, and he guessed the ultimate issue. Israel's rejection was not her final doom. It was indeed the penalty of her unbelief, but it was designed to move her to repentance. The spectacle of her

a hidden purpose not yet revealed.

* Rom. ix. 2.

own loss and the enrichment of the despised Gentiles would provoke her to jealousy, and she would turn to the Lord. "I would not, brethren," he writes to the heathen converts at Rome,* "have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved. For as ye in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience, even so have these also now been disobedient, that by the mercy shewn to you they also may now obtain mercy. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgements, and His ways past tracing out!"

The past a prophecy of the future.

And so the Apostle turned history into prophecy.† The revelation of the mystery of God's past dealings with the Gentiles emboldened him to anticipate a no less glorious revelation of the mystery of His present dealings with

* Rom. xi. 25, 26, 30, 31, 33.

† Cf. Calvin on 1 Cor. xiv. 6: "A prophet will be an interpreter and minister of revelation."

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Israel, after the manner of the Quaker poet:

> "I dimly guess from blessings known
> Of greater out of sight,
> And, with the chastened Psalmist, own
> His judgments too are right.
>
> "I know not what the future hath
> Of marvel or surprise,
> Assured alone that life and death
> His mercy underlies."

An unwritten saying about "the mystery of the Lord."

The idea of the mystery of God was not the Apostle's own: he derived it from the Master; and it is somewhat surprising that so rich a thought should occur only once in our Lord's recorded teaching. It does not, however, follow that He expressed it only once. It would be frequently on His lips, and another instance is furnished by an unwritten saying of His which Clement of Alexandria quotes thus:*

> "It was not of grudgingness that our Lord gave the charge in a certain Gospel: 'My mystery is for Me and the sons of My house.'"

---

* *Strom.* V. x. 63: *οὐ γὰρ φθονῶν, φησὶ, παρήγγειλεν ὁ Κύριος ἔν τινι εὐαγγελίῳ· μυστήριον ἐμὸν ἐμοὶ καὶ τοῖς υἱοῖς τοῦ οἴκου μου.* *Clement. Hom.* xix. 20: *μεμνήμεθα τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν*

The meaning of the saying is that, even as the secret lore of the ancient Mysteries was hidden from the uninitiated, so "to them that are without,"* lacking the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the mysteries of God remain unrevealed. And this is a truth which our Lord frequently proclaimed.

Its meaning.

He was the revelation of the Unseen Father. "He that hath seen Me," He said,† "hath seen the Father"; yet only a few of those who beheld Him in the days of His flesh recognised the Father in Him. And the reason is that to them alone was given that spiritual vision which is "the art of seeing things invisible." St. John saw Jesus, and "the eyes of his heart were enlightened,"‡ and he beheld His glory, and his testimony to that which he saw and heard is a Gospel of the grace of God in our Lord Jesus Christ. Caiaphas and Pontius Pilate also saw Jesus, and had either of them written a narrative of

(1) Seeing the Father in Jesus.

καὶ διδασκάλου ὡς ἐντελλόμενος εἶπεν ἡμῖν· τὰ μυστήρια ἐμοὶ καὶ τοῖς ὑιοῖς τοῦ οἴκου μου φυλάξατε. Cf. Isa. xxiv. 16 (Theodotion's version): τὸ μυστήριόν μου ἐμοὶ καὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς. Vulg.: "secretum meum mihi, secretum meum mihi."

* St. Mark iv. 11. † St. John xiv. 9.

‡ Eph. i. 18.

his dealings with Him, it would have been a remarkable book and, to the historian, invaluable. It would have shed light on much that is obscure, and it might well have been a literary masterpiece. But it would in no wise have been a Gospel. For neither to Caiaphas nor to Pilate was granted "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."* The glory of the Lord was hidden from them. They saw Him, but they did not see the Father in Him. And therefore He said: "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him." † "My mystery is for Me and the sons of My house."

(2) Spiritual understanding of the Word.

The saying applies also to the understanding of the Holy Scriptures. They are the Word of God, but He speaks in them only to the souls that know Him. "The natural man," says St. Paul,‡ "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually

* Eph. i. 17. † St. Matt. xi. 27.
‡ 1 Cor. ii. 14.

discerned." As Jeremy Taylor has it,* "To evil persons the whole system of this wisdom is insipid and flat, dull as the foot of a rock, and unlearned as the elements of our mother tongue; but so are mathematics to a Scythian boor, and music to a camel." The reason is that the sacred writers were taught by the Holy Spirit, and unless we share His inspiration, we cannot understand what they have written. "The same Spirit," says Calvin,† "who spoke by the mouth of the Prophets, must needs penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully uttered the mandate of divine inspiration. And this connection is most aptly put by Isaiah in these words:‡ 'My Spirit which is in thee, and the words which I have put in thy mouth and thy seed's, shall never fail.' It distresses some good men that, while the ungodly murmur with impunity against the Word of God, there is no clear proof ready to their hand. As if indeed the Spirit were not called 'a seal' and 'an earnest' for confirming the faith of the godly for this reason, that, until He enlightens

* *The Great Exemplar*, Preface 43.
† *Instit.* I. vii. 4. ‡ lix. 21.

their minds, they always waver amid many hesitations." Hence it is that only as the Lord opens our eyes can we behold wonders out of His Law.* It is told of St. Bonaventura, the Seraphic Doctor, that, being asked by his friend, St. Thomas Aquinas, how he had acquired his deep knowledge of God, he said nothing, but pointed to the Crucifix. It was there that the mysteries of Heaven had been revealed to him. This is ever the golden secret, and it was practised by St. Vincent Ferrer, who always wrote with the Crucifix before him. "Study," he said, "fatigues and drains the mind and heart. Go from time to time to refresh them at the feet of Jesus Christ under His Cross."

(3) Spiritual Independence.

The saying finds yet another application in the principle of the Spiritual Independence of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ and His sole headship over her. He is the only Lord of the conscience, and His Word is the only rule of faith; and it is a usurpation of His prerogative when a secular authority intrudes into things spiritual or presumes to prescribe a creed. "Be not ye called Rabbi," says our Lord: † "for One

* Psa. cxix. 18. † St. Matt. xxiii. 8–10.

is your teacher, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father on the earth: for One is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for One is your master, even the Christ." "My mystery is for Me and the sons of My house."

The principle was nobly expressed in the sixth century by Theodoric the Ostrogoth, the first barbarian emperor of the West, in his remonstrance with Justin, the persecuting emperor of Constantinople.* "To pretend," he wrote, "to a dominion over the conscience is to usurp the prerogative of God. By the nature of things the power of sovereigns is confined to political government; they have no right of punishment but over those who disturb the public peace; the most dangerous heresy is that of a sovereign who separates himself from part of his subjects because they believe not according to his belief." There could hardly be a more accurate definition of the doctrine of Spiritual Independence —that historic principle which the Scottish

Theodoric and Justin.

* Milman, *Latin Christianity*, Bk. III, chap. iii. Cf. Tertull. *Ad Scap.* 2: "It belongs not to religion to compel religion, which ought to be undertaken voluntarily, not by force."

Church has been especially called in the providence of God to maintain and vindicate.* It is the principle which has actuated all her contendings since the Reformation; and never was it more strikingly affirmed than during that memorable interview between James VI and a deputation of the clergy at Falkland Palace in the year 1596, when Andrew Melville took the angry king by the sleeve, and styled him "God's sillie vassal." "Sir," said he, "as divers times before I have told you, so now again I must tell you, there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland: there is king James, the head of this commonwealth, and there is Christ Jesus, the King of the Church, whose subject James the sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. We will yield to you your place, and give you all due obedience; but again I say, you are not the head of the Church; you cannot give us that eternal life which we seek for even in this world, and you cannot deprive

Andrew Melville and James VI.

* Cf. Dorner, *Syst. of Christ. Doctr.* IV. 151: "The idea of the sole sovereignty of Christ has been specially developed by the Scottish Church."

us of it. Sir, when you were in your swaddling clothes, Christ Jesus reigned freely in this land in spite of all His enemies."

This principle of the Spiritual Independence of the Church is identical with the Reformed doctrine of the kingly office of our Lord; and it prohibits alike pontifical or hierarchical dominance and civil usurpation of spiritual authority. The Church is the household of Christ,* and He is her only Head and His will her only law. It is sacrilege when a stranger intermeddles with her affairs; and it is disloyalty when, whether for fear or for favour, she submits to a stranger's authority. "We remember our Lord and Master how He commanded and said unto us: 'Keep the mysteries for Me and the sons of My house.'"

The headship of Christ.

* Heb. iii. 5, 6.

A FRAGMENT OF A LOST GOSPEL

"Thou, O Spirit, that doth prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like, sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And madest it pregnant: what in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support."

MILTON.

VIII

A FRAGMENT OF A LOST GOSPEL

THERE were two main controversies between our Lord and His implacable adversaries the Pharisees during His ministry. The first and chief was, as we have seen,* the question of Sabbath observance; and the second, hardly less bitter, related to those ceremonial ablutions which the Pharisees practised with such diligent and ridiculous scrupulosity.† "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders: and when they come from the marketplace, except they wash themselves, they eat not: and many other things there be, which they have received to hold,

The offence of ceremonial ablution.

* Cf. pp. 24 ff.

† Cf. *The Days of His Flesh*, p. 43.

washings of cups, and pots, and brasen vessels."* The ritual was sorely abused. It fostered that spirit of externalism which was the curse of Jewish religion in later days; and our Lord steadfastly neglected it, insisting upon purity of heart as God's sole requirement.

An encounter with a Pharisee.

The Evangelists have recorded several striking instances of His controversies with the Pharisees on this score;† and another is furnished by a papyrus from the treasure-trove of Oxyrhynchus.‡ It is a fragment of a lost Gospel, and it relates a dramatic encounter between Jesus and a Pharisee in the Temple at Jerusalem. The papyrus is somewhat mutilated, especially towards the end; but the task of restoration is generally easy, and the story runs thus:§

"And He took them and brought them into the place of purification itself, and He was walking about in the Temple. And a certain Pharisee, a high priest, Levi by name, approached and met them, and said to the Saviour: 'Who permitted thee to walk this place of purification and to see

---

* St. Mark vii. 3, 4.

† Cf. St. Matt. xv. 1–20; St. Mark vii. 1–23; St. Luke xi. 38; St. Matt. xxiii. 25, 26.

‡ *Oxyrh. Pap.* 840, vol. v. pp. 1 ff.

§ For the Greek text see pp. 141 f.

these holy vessels, when thou hast not washed thyself, nor yet have thy disciples bathed their feet? But, being defiled, thou hast walked this Temple, though it is a clean place, which none other, save one that hath washed himself and changed his garments, walketh, neither dareth he to see these holy vessels.' And straightway the Saviour stood with His disciples and answered him: 'Art thou, being here in the Temple, clean?' The other saith to Him: 'I am clean. For I have washed myself in the pool of David, and by the one stair I descended and by the other I ascended; and I arrayed myself in white garments and clean; and then I came and looked upon these holy vessels.' The Saviour answered and said unto him: 'Woe, ye blind that see not! Thou hast washed thyself with these pouring waters in which dogs and swine have been cast night and day, and hast laved and wiped the outside skin which the harlots and the flute-girls anoint and wash and beautify to excite the lust of men; but within they are filled with scorpions and every sort of wickedness. But I and My disciples, who, thou sayest, have not been bathed, have been bathed in the waters of eternal life that come from (the throne of God).'"

A Gospel of the second century.

It would appear from the handwriting of the fragment that the book dated from the fourth century; but it was only a copy, and the original was far older. "The holy quaternion of the Gospels"* had gained universal acceptance ere the close of the second century, and thereafter apocryphal

* Euseb. *H. E.* iii. 25: *τὴν ἁγίαν τῶν εὐαγγελίων τετρακτύν.*

writers confined themselves to the compilation of legends regarding the childhood of Jesus. His ministry was consecrated ground, and they held aloof from it. Hence it would follow that, since this Gospel deals with His ministry, it was written ere the close of the second century. And certainly it belongs to a later period than our canonical Gospels, since, whereas they always speak of "Jesus" or "the Lord," it speaks of "the Saviour"—an appellation which came into vogue in post-apostolic days.*

Unhistorical details:

It may be assumed then that the Gospel was composed during the latter half of the second century. This is a high antiquity, and there is no improbability in the incident. It was the custom of our Lord, when He visited Jerusalem, to walk and teach in the Court of the Temple, and He had frequent encounters with the rulers there.† Neverthe-

* The title was at first disliked because (1) it was borne by kings and emperors (cf. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, pp. 348, 368 f.), and (2) it was used by the Valentinians (cf. Iren. I. i. 3); but it soon established itself, and its use here is no evidence that this Gospel was a Gnostic writing.

† Cf. St. Matt. xxi. 12, 14, 15; xxi. 23–27; xxvi. 55; St. John vii. 14, 28; x. 23; xviii. 20.

less the details of the narrative are glaringly fictitious.

Jesus is represented as walking with His disciples in "the place of purification," which is evidently conceived as a court within the sacred precincts, open to public resort. There was no such place in the Temple. There was indeed a "Chamber of Washers" or "House of Baptism," where the officiating priests had to bathe ere entering on the services of the day; and there was, moreover, the laver of brass in the Court of the Temple between the porch and the altar, where they had also to wash their hands and their feet.* But it was the priests alone who had to perform those ceremonial ablutions and array themselves in white garments: † it was not required of ordinary worshippers like our Lord and His disciples. Nor is there any record of a "pool of David," approached and quitted by separate stairs, and polluted by dogs and swine.

(1) the topography of the Temple;

Again, the combination "a certain Pharisee,

* Exod. xxx. 17–21; xl. 30–32. Cf. Schürer, *Hist. of Jew. People*, II. i. p. 278; Lightfoot, *Hor. Hebr.*, vol. i. pp. 643 ff.

† Schürer, *ibid.* p. 276.

a high priest," is somewhat suspicious, since the priesthood was generally recruited from the Sadducean order.* The rule, however, was not absolute: there are instances of priestly Pharisees,† and it is possible that there may have been a high priest of the Pharisaic order in our Lord's day. He need not have been the acting high priest, since the high priests *emeriti* retained the title.

(2) a priestly Pharisee.

The case would seem to be that this Gospel was written in Egypt generations after the destruction of Jerusalem, when the Holy City and its Holy Place were only a vague memory. The writer had heard a credible tradition of an encounter between Jesus and a Pharisee in the Court of the Temple, and when he wove it into his narrative, he depicted the situation according to his fancy, and his representation is shaped and coloured by his own circumstances. It is an Egyptian temple and Egyptian ritual that he has in view; and when he inserted that rhetorical touch of "the waters in which dogs and swine have been cast night and day," he

A historical incident with alien colouring.

* Cf. *The Days of His Flesh*, p. 42.

† Cf. Schürer, *ibid.* II. ii. p. 30.

was thinking of the stagnant pool of his Egyptian village. The phrase "harlots and flute-girls" is another touch of local colouring. Flute-girls and dancing-girls figured at the heathen symposia, and belonged to the order of *hetæræ*.* And the high priest's complaint that the disciples "walked the place of purification and saw the holy vessels" though they had not "bathed their feet," recalls the heathen proverb "with unwashed feet." † It was applied to one who presumed to meddle with things too high for him, and originated in the ritual of the Greek Mysteries, where the initiate had first to undergo ceremonial ablution. It was the familiar ritual of an Egyptian temple that the writer had in view when he put this alien language in the mouth of a Jewish high priest.

Apologetic value of the fragment.

The conclusion, then, is that the encounter in the Temple which our fragment records is probably an authentic incident of our Lord's ministry, but it is dressed up in alien trappings. The Temple at Jerusalem had long perished, and the writer had never seen it, nor had he investigated its

* Cf. Becker, *Charicles*, pp. 245, 344.

† Cf. *The Days of His Flesh*, p. 440.

historic monuments; and his fancy figured it after the familiar style of the temples which he knew in the land of Egypt. His narrative adds nothing to our knowledge of the Lord's ministry, yet it is in no wise valueless. And its value lies in the contrast which it presents to the canonical Gospels. There is no characteristic of the latter more impressive than their minute and unfailing verisimilitude—the accuracy of their references to the contemporary scenes and manners of the Holy Land. As one studies that monumental work, Dr. John Lightfoot's *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ*, with its wealth of illustrations from Rabbinical literature, one discovers how faithful is the local colouring of the Gospels: they breathe the very atmosphere of the country and the time. And when one turns to a document like this fragment and marks how ill the writer has succeeded in reconstructing a remote and traditional situation, one realises how sure it is that the evangelic story is no tissue of "cunningly devised fables"* but the testimony of men who had companied with Jesus, and spake of the things which they had seen and heard.

* 2 Pet. i. 16.

TEXT OF THE FRAGMENT

καὶ παραλαβὼν αὐτοὺς
εἰσήγαγεν εἰς αὐτὸ τὸ ἁγνευτήριον * καὶ
περιεπάτει ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ. καὶ προσε(λ)-
θὼν Φαρισαῖός τις ἀρχιερεὺς Λευ(εἰς) †
τὰ ὄνομα συνέτυχεν αὐτοῖς καὶ ε(ἶπεν)
τῷ σωρι· τίς ἐπέτρεψέν σοι πατ(εῖν)
τοῦτο τὸ ἁγνευτήριον καὶ ἰδεῖν (ταῦ)-
τα τὰ ἅγια σκεύη μήτε λουσα(μ)ένῳ μ(ή)-
τε μὴν τῶν μαθητῶν σου τοὺς π(όδας βα)-
πτισθέντων ; ‡ ἀλλὰ μεμολυ(μμένος) §
ἐπάτησας τοῦτο τὸ ἱερὸν τ(όπον ὄν)-
τα καθαρὸν ὂν οὐδεὶς ἄ(λλος εἰ μὴ)
λουσάμενος καὶ ἀλλά(ξας τὰ ἐνδύ)-
ματα πατεῖ οὐδὲ ὁ(ρᾶν τολμᾷ ταῦτα)

* This word occurs nowhere in the New Testament.

† The name is uncertain, the three surviving letters being indistinct.

‡ Cf. St. John xiii. 1–15.

§ Cf. 1 Cor. viii. 7 ; Rev. iii. 4, xiv. 4 ; 2 Cor. vii. 1.

τα ἅγια σκεύη. καὶ σ(τὰς εὐθέως ὁ σωρ)
σ(ὺν τ)οῖς μαθηταῖ(ς ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ·)
σὺ οὖν ἐνταῦθα ὢν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καθα-
ρεύεις; λέγει αὐτῷ ἐκεῖνος· καθαρεύω· ἐλουσάμην γὰρ ἐν τῇ λίμνῃ τοῦ Δδ καὶ δι' ἑτέρας κλίμακος κατελθὼν δι' ἑτέρας
ἀ(ν)ῆλθον καὶ λευκὰ ἐνδύματα ἐνε-
δυσάμην καὶ καθαρὰ καὶ τότε ἦλθον
καὶ προσέβλεψα τούτοις τοῖς ἁγίοις
σκεύεσιν. ὁ σωρ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπο-
(κρι)θεὶς εἶπεν· οὐαί, τυφλοὶ μὴ ὁρῶν-
τ(ε)ς·* σὺ ἐλούσω τούτοις τοῖς χεομένοις
ὕ(δ)ασιν ἐν οἷς κύνες καὶ χοῖροι βέβλην-
(ται) νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας καὶ νιψάμε-
(ν)ος τὸ ἐκτὸς δέρμα † ὅπερ
(κα)ὶ αἱ πόρναι καὶ α(ἱ) αὐλητρίδες μυρί-
(ζ)ου(σιν κ)αὶ λούουσιν καὶ σμήχουσι
(καὶ κ)αλλωπίζουσι πρὸς ἐπιθυμί-
(αν τ)ῶν ἀνων· ἔνδοθεν δὲ ‡ ἐκεῖ-
(ναι πεπλ)ήρωται § σκορπίων ‖ καὶ
(πάσης κα)κίας. ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ οἱ

* Cf. St. Matt xv. 14, xxiii. 16, 17, 19, 24, 26; St. John ix. 39–41.

† Cf. St. Matt. xxiii. 26.

‡ Cf. St. Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.

§ A slip for πεπλήρωνται.

‖ Cf. St. Luke x. 19, xi. 12.

TEXT OF THE FRAGMENT

(μαθηταί μου) οὓς λέγεις μὴ βεβα-
(πτίσθαι βεβά)μμεθα ἐν ὕδασι ζω-
(ῆς αἰωνίου τοῖ)ς ἐλθοῦσιν ἀπὸ (τοῦ)
(θρόνου Θυ).*

* A purely conjectural supplement. Cf. Rev. xxii 1: ποταμὸν ὕδατος ζωῆς ἐκπορευόμενον ἐκ τοῦ θρόνου Θεοῦ.

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